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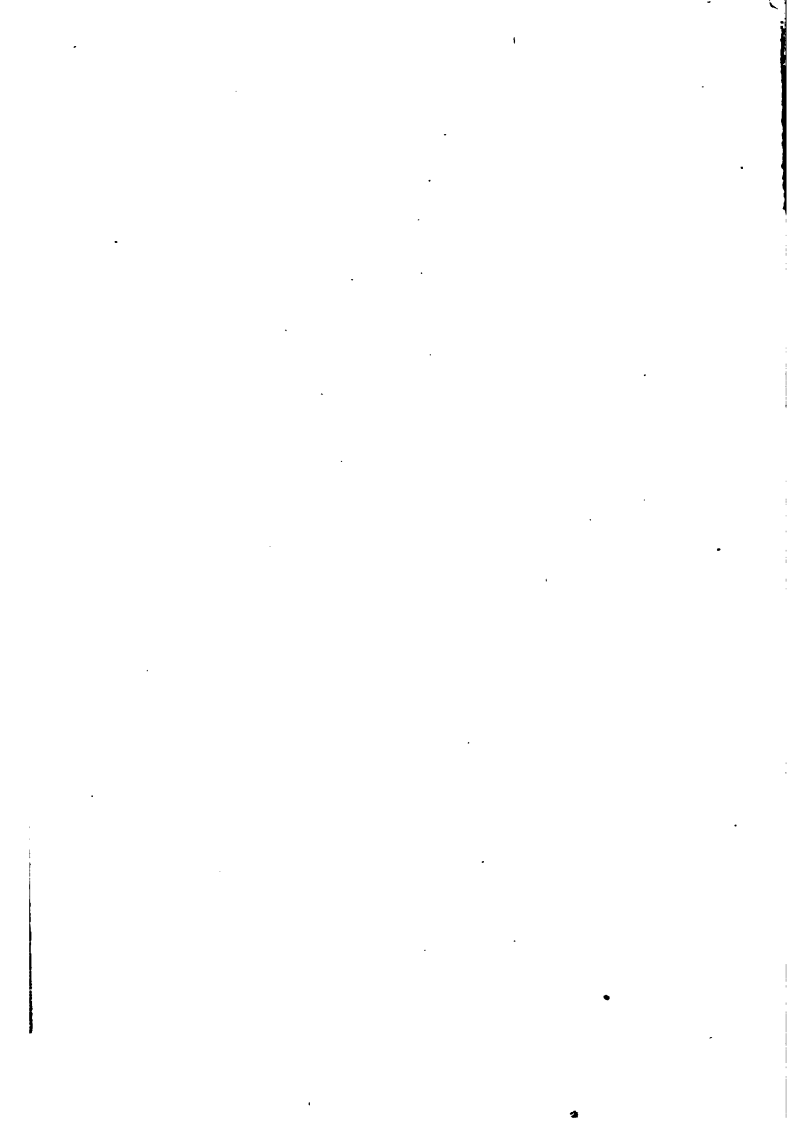
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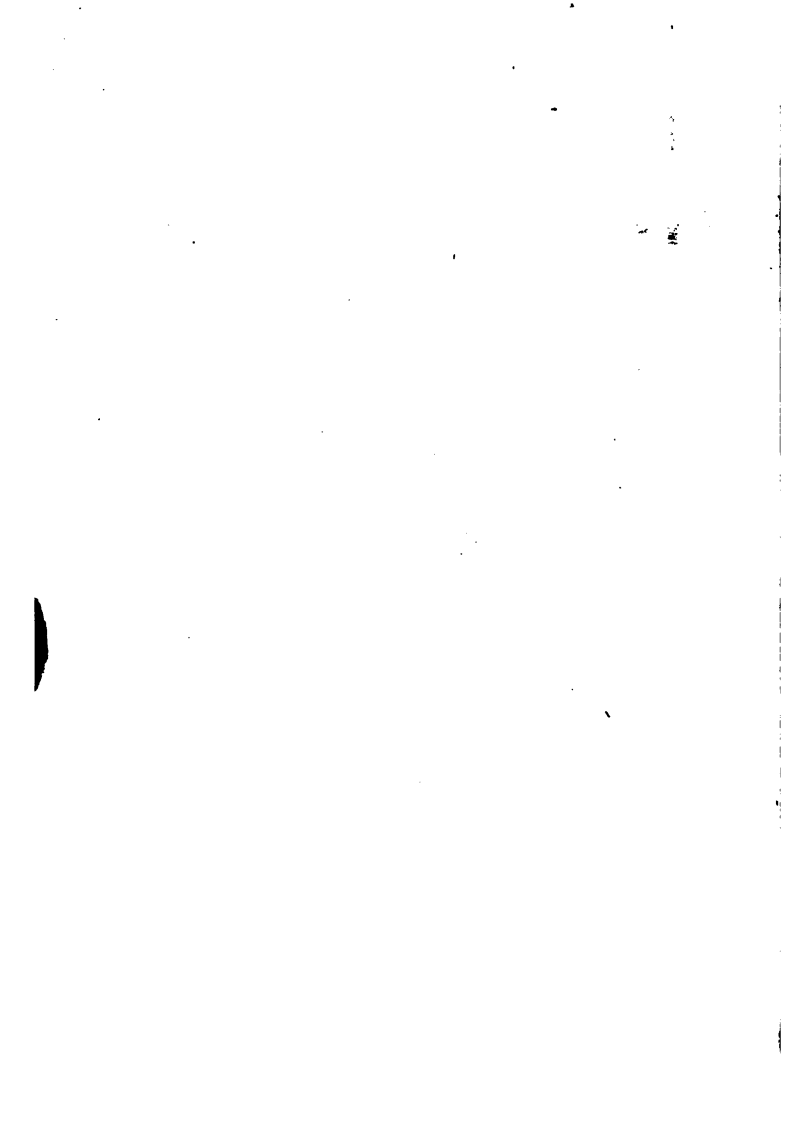
VOL. 1731.

A THOUSAND MILES UP THE NILE

BY
AMELIA B. EDWARDS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



A THOUSAND MILES UP THE NILE.

BY

AMELIA B. EDWARDS,

AUTHOR OF

"BARBARA'S HISTORY," "UNTRODDEN PEAKS," ETC.

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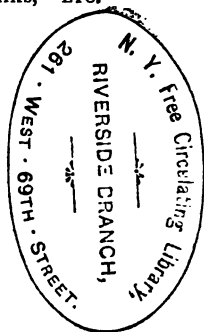
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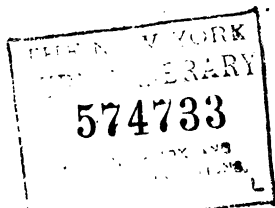
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A THOUSAND MILES UP THE NILE.

CHAPTER XIV.

Korosko to Abou Simbel.

It so happened that we arrived at Korosko on the eve of the Eed el Kebeer, or the anniversary of the Sacrifice of Abraham; when, according to the Moslem version, Ishmael was the intended victim, and a ram the substituted offering. Now this Eed el Kebeer, being one of the great Feasts of the Mohammedan Kalendar, is a day of gifts and good-wishes. The rich visit their friends and distribute meat to the poor; and every true believer goes to the mosque to say his prayers in the morning. So, instead of starting as usual at sunrise, we treated our sailors to a sheep, and waited till past noon, that they might make holiday.

They began the day by trooping off to the village mosque in all the glory of new blue blouses, spotless turbans, and scarlet leather slippers; then loitered about till dinner-time, when the said sheep, stewed with lentils and garlic, brought the festivities to an end. It was a thin and ancient beast, and must have been horribly tough; but an epicure might have envied the child-like enjoyment with which our honest fellows squatted, cross-legged and happy, round the smoking

cauldron; chattering, laughing, feasting; dipping their fingers in the common mess; washing the whole down with long draughts of Nile water; and finishing off with a hubble-bubble passed from lip to lip, and a mouthful of muddy coffee. By a little after midday they had put off their finery, harnessed themselves to the tow-rope, and set to work to haul us through the rocky shoals that here impede the current.

From Korosko to Derr, the actual distance is about eleven miles and a half; but what with obstructions in the bed of the river, and what with a wind that would have been favourable but for another great bend which the Nile takes towards the East, those eleven miles and a half cost us the best part of two days' hard tracking.

Landing from time to time when the boat was close in shore, we found the order of planting everywhere the same, lupins and lentils on the slope against the water-line; an uninterrupted grove of palms on the edge of the bank; in the space beyond, fields of cotton and young corn; and then the desert. The arable soil was divided off, as usual, by hundreds of water channels; and seemed to be excellently farmed as well as abundantly irrigated. Not a weed was to be seen; not an inch of soil appeared to be wasted. In odd corners where there was room for nothing else, cucumbers and vegetable-marrows flourished and bore fruit. Nowhere had we seen castor-berries so large, cotton-pods so full, or palms so lofty.

Here also, for the first time out of Egypt, we observed among the bushes a few hoopoes and other small birds; and on a sand-slope down by the river, a group of wild-ducks. We—that is to say one of the

M. B.s and the Writer—had wandered off that way in search of crocodiles. The two Dahabeeyahs, each with its file of trackers, were slowly labouring up against the current about a mile away. All was intensely hot, and intensely silent. We had walked far, and had seen no crocodile. What we should have done if we had met one, I am not prepared to say. Perhaps we should have run away. At all events, we were just about to turn back when we caught sight of the ducks sunning themselves, half-asleep, on the brink of a tiny pool about an eighth of a mile away.

Creeping cautiously under the bank, we contrived to get within a few yards of them. They were four—a drake, a duck, and two young ones—exquisitely feathered, and as small as teal. The parent-birds could scarcely have measured more than eight inches from head to tail. All alike had chestnut coloured heads with a narrow buff stripe down the middle, like a parting; maroon backs; wing-feathers maroon and grey; and tails tipped with buff. They were so pretty, and the little family party was so complete, that the Writer could not help secretly rejoicing that Alfred and his gun were safe on board the Bagstones.

High above the Libyan bank on the sloping verge of the desert, stands, half-drowned in sand, the little Temple of Amada. Seeing it from the opposite side while duck-hunting in the morning, I had taken it for one of the many stone shelters erected by Mohammed Ali for the accommodation of cattle levied annually in the Soudan. It proved, however, to be a temple, small but massive; built with squared blocks of sand-stone; and dating back to the very old times of the Usurtasens and Thothmes. It consists of a portico, a

transverse atrium, and three small chambers. The pillars of the portico are mere square piers. The rooms are small and low. The roof, constructed of oblong blocks, is flat from end to end. As an architectural structure it is in fact but a few degrees removed from Stonehenge.

A shed without, this little temple is, however, a cameo within. Nowhere, save in the tomb of Ti, had we seen bas-reliefs so delicately modelled, so rich in colour. Here, as elsewhere, the walls are covered with groups of Kings and Gods and hieroglyphic texts. The figures are slender and animated. The head-dresses, jewellery, and patterned robes are elaborately drawn and painted. Every head looks like a portrait; every hieroglyphic form is a study in miniature.

Apart from its exquisite finish, the wall-sculpture of Amada has, however, nothing in common with the wall-sculpture of the Ancient Empire. It belongs to the period of Egyptian Renaissance; and, though inferior in power and naturalness to the work of the elder school, it marks just that moment of special development when the art of modelling in low relief had touched the highest level to which it ever again attained. That highest level belongs to the reigns of Thothmes the Second and Thothmes the Third; just as the perfect era in architecture belongs to the reigns of Seti the First and Rameses the Second. It is for this reason that Amada is so precious. It registers an epoch in the history of the art, and gives us the best of that epoch in the hour of its zenith. The sculptor is here seen to be working within bounds already prescribed; yet within those bounds he still enjoys a certain liberty. His art, though largely conventionalised,

is not yet stereotyped. His sense of beauty still finds expression. There is, in short, a grace and sweetness about the bas-relief designs of Amada for which one looks in vain to the storied walls of Karnak.

The chambers are half-choked with sand; and we had to crawl into the sanctuary upon our hands and knees. A long inscription at the upper end records how Amenhotep the Second, returning from his first campaign against the Ruten, slew seven kings with his own hand; six of whom were gibbeted upon the ramparts of Thebes, while the body of the seventh was sent to Ethiopia by water and suspended on the outer wall of the city of Napata,* "in order that the negroes might behold the victories of the Pharaoh in all the lands of the world."

In the darkest corner of the atrium we observed a curious tableau representing the King embraced by a Goddess. He holds a short straight sword in his right hand, and the crux ansata in his left. On his head he wears a blue mitre studded with gold stars and ornamented with the royal asp. The Goddess clasps him lovingly about the neck, and bends her lips to his. The artist has given her the yellow complexion conventionally ascribed to women; but her saucy mouth and nez retroussé are distinctly European. Dressed in the fashion of the nineteenth century, she might have served Leech as a model for his Girl of the Period.

* A city of Ethiopia, now identified with the ruins at Gebel Barkal. The worship of Ammon was established at Napata towards the end of the XXth Dynasty, and it was from the priests of Thebes who settled at that time in Napata, that the Ethiopian conquerors of Egypt (XXIIIrd Dynasty) were descended.

The sand has drifted so high at the back of the Temple, that one steps upon the roof as upon a terrace only just raised above the level of the desert. Soon that level will be equal; and if nothing is done to rescue it within the next generation or two, the whole building will become engulfed, and its very site be forgotten.

The view from the roof, looking back towards Korosko and forward towards Derr, is one of the finest—perhaps quite the finest—in Nubia. The Nile curves grandly through the foreground. The palm-woods of Derr are green in the distance. The mountain region which we have just traversed ranges, a vast crescent of multitudinous peaks, round two-thirds of the horizon. Ridge beyond ridge, chain beyond chain, flushing crimson in light and deepening through every tint of amethyst and purple in shadow, those innumerable summits fade into tenderest blue upon the horizon. As the sun sets, they seem to glow; to become incandescent; to be touched with flame—as in the old time when every crater was a fount of fire.

Struggling next morning through a maze of sand-banks, we reached Derr soon after breakfast. This town—the Nubian capital—lies a little lower than the level of the bank, so that only a few mud walls are visible from the river. Having learned by this time that a capital town is but a bigger village, containing perhaps a mosque and a market-place, we were not disappointed by the unimposing aspect of the Nubian metropolis.

Great, however, was our surprise when, instead of the usual clamorous crowd screaming, pushing, scrambling, and bothering for backsheesh, we found the

landing-place deserted. Two or three native boats lay up under the bank, empty. There was literally not a soul in sight. L. and the Little Lady, eager to buy some of the basket-work for which the place is famous, looked blank. Talhamy, anxious to lay in a store of fresh eggs and vegetables, looked blanker.

We landed. Before us lay an open space, at the farther end of which, facing the river, stood the Governor's palace; the said palace being a magnified mud hut, with a frieze of baked bricks round the top, and an imposing stone doorway. In this doorway, according to immemorial usage, the great man gives audience. We saw him—a mere youth, apparently—puffing away at a long chibouque, in the midst of a little group of greybeard elders. They looked at us gravely, immovably; like smoking automata. One longed to go up and ask them if they were all transformed to black granite from the waists to the feet, and if the inhabitants of Derr had been changed into blue stones.

Still bent on buying baskets, if baskets were to be bought,—bent also on finding out the whereabouts of a certain rock-cut temple which our books told us to look for at the back of the town, we turned aside into a straggling street leading towards the desert. The houses looked better built than usual; some pains having evidently been bestowed in smoothing the surface of the mud, and ornamenting the doorways with fragments of coloured pottery. A cracked willow-pattern dinner-plate set like a fanlight over one, and a white soup-plate over another, came doubtless from the canteen of some English Dahabeeyah, and were the pride of their possessors. Looking from end to end of this street—and it was a tolerably long one, with the Nile

at one end, and the desert at the other—we saw no sign or shadow of moving creature. Only one young woman, hearing strange voices talking a strange tongue, peeped out suddenly from a half-opened door as we went by; then, seeing me look at the baby in her arms (which was hideous and had sore eyes) drew her veil across its face, and darted back again. She thought I coveted her treasure, and she dreaded the Evil Eye.

All at once we heard a sound like the far-off quivering cry of many owls. It shrilled—swelled—wavered—dropped—then died away, like the moaning of the wind at sea. We held our breath and listened. We had never heard anything so wild and plaintive. Then suddenly, through an opening in the houses, we saw a great crowd on a space of rising ground about a quarter of a mile away. This crowd consisted of men only—a close, turbaned mass some three or four hundred in number; all standing quite still and silent; all looking in the same direction.

Hurrying on to the desert, we saw the strange sight at which they were looking.

The scene was a barren sandslope hemmed in between the town and the cliffs, and dotted over with graves. The actors were all women. Huddled together under a long wall some few hundred yards away, bare-headed, and exposed to the blaze of the morning sun, they outnumbered the men by a full third. Some were sitting, some standing; while in their midst, pressing round a young woman who seemed to act as leader, there swayed and circled and shuffled a compact phalanx of dancers. Upon this young woman the eyes of all were turned. A black Cassandra, she rocked her

body from side to side, clapped her hands above her head, and poured forth a wild declamatory chant, which the rest echoed. This chant seemed to be divided into strophes, at the end of each of which she paused, beat her breast, and broke into that terrible wail that we had heard just now from a distance.

Her brother, it seemed, had died last night; and we were witnessing his funeral.

The actual interment was over by the time we reached the spot; but four men were still busy filling the grave with sand, which they scraped up, a bowlful at a time, and stamped down with their naked feet.

The deceased being unmarried, his sister led the choir of mourners. She was a tall, gaunt young woman of the plainest Nubian type, with high cheekbones, eyes slanting upwards at the corners, and an enormous mouth full of glittering teeth. On her head she wore a white cloth smeared with dust. Her companions were distinguished by a narrow white fillet, bound about the brow, and tied with two long ends behind. They had hidden their necklaces and bracelets, and wore trailing robes and shawls, and loose trousers of black or blue calico.

We stood for a long time watching their uncouth dance. None of the women seemed to notice us; but the men made way civilly and gravely, letting us pass to the front, that we might get a better view of the ceremony.

By and by an old woman rose slowly from the midst of those who were sitting, and moved with tottering uncertain steps towards a higher point of ground, a little apart from the crowd. There was a movement

of compassion among the men; one of whom turned to the Writer and said gently:—"His mother."

She was a small, feeble old woman, very poorly clad. Her hands and arms were like the hands and arms of a mummy, and her withered black face looked ghastly under its mask of dust. For a few moments, swaying her body slowly to and fro, she watched the grave-diggers stamping down the sand; then stretched out her arms, and broke into a torrent of lamentations. The dialect of Derr* is strange and barbarous; but we felt as if we understood every word she uttered. Presently the tears began to make channels down her cheeks—her voice became choked with sobs—and falling down in a sort of helpless heap, like a broken-hearted dog, she lay with her face to the ground, and there stayed.

Meanwhile, the sand being now filled in and mounded up, the men betook themselves to a place where the rock had given way, and selected a couple of big stones from the débris. These they placed at the head and foot of the grave; and all was done.

Instantly—perhaps at an appointed signal, though we saw none given—the wailing ceased; the women rose; every tongue was loosened; and the whole became a moving, animated, noisy throng dispersing in a dozen different directions.

We turned away with the rest; the Writer and the Painter rambling off in search of the temple, while the other three devoted themselves to the pursuit of baskets and native jewellery. When we looked back presently,

* The men hereabout can nearly all speak Arabic; but the women of Nubia know only the Kensee and Berberee tongues, the first of which is spoken as far as Korosko.

the crowd was gone; but the desolate mother still lay motionless in the dust.

It chanced that we witnessed many funerals in Nubia; so many that one sometimes felt inclined to doubt whether the Governor of Assouan had not reported over-favourably of the health of the province. The ceremonial, with its dancing and chanting, was always much the same; always barbaric, and in the highest degree artificial. One would like to know how much of it is derived from purely African sources, and how much from ancient Egyptian tradition. The dance is most probably Ethiopian. Lepsius, travelling through the Soudan in A.D. 1844,* saw something of the kind at a funeral in Wed Medineh, about half-way between Sennaar and Khartoom. The white fillet worn by the choir of mourners is, on the other hand, distinctly Egyptian. We afterwards saw it represented in paintings of funeral processions on the walls of several tombs at Thebes,** where the wailing women are seen to be gathering up the dust in their hands and casting it upon their heads, just as they do now. As for the wail—beginning high, and descending through a scale divided, not by semi-tones, but thirds of tones, to a final note about an octave and a half lower than that from which it started—it probably echoes to this day the very pitch and rhythm of the wail that followed the Pharaohs to their sepulchres in the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings. Like the zaghareet, or joy-cry, which every mother teaches to her little girls, and

* Lepsius's *Letters from Egypt, Ethiopia, etc.*, Letter XVIII. p. 184. Bohn's ed. A.D. 1853.

** See an interesting account of funereal rites and ceremonies in Sir G. Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. II. chap. X., Lond. 1871. Also woodcuts Nos. 493 and 494 in the same chapter of the same work.

which, it is said, can only be acquired in very early youth, it has been handed down from generation to generation through an untold succession of ages. The song to which the Fellah works his shadoof, and the monotonous chant of the sakkieh-driver, have perhaps as remote an origin. But of all old, mournful, human sounds, the death-wail that we heard at Derr is perhaps one of the very oldest—certainly the most mournful.

The temple here, though dating from the reign of Rameses II., is of rude design and indifferent execution. Partly constructed, partly excavated, it is approached by a forecourt, the roof of which, now gone, was supported by eight square columns. Of these columns only the bases remain. Four massive piers against which once stood four colossi, upheld the roof of the portico and gave admission by three entrances to the rock-cut chambers beyond. That portico is now roofless. Nothing is left of the colossi but their feet. All is ruin; and ruin without beauty.

Seen from within, however, the place is not without a kind of gloomy grandeur. Two rows of square columns, three at each side, divide the large hall into three aisles. This hall is about forty feet square, and the pillars have been left standing in the living rock, like those in the early tombs at Siout. The daylight, half blocked out by the fallen portico, is pleasantly subdued, and finds its way dimly to the sanctuary at the farther end. The sculptures of the interior, though much damaged, are less defaced than those of the outer court. Walls, pillars, doorways, are covered with bas-reliefs. The King and Phtah, the King and Ra, the King and Ammon Ra, stand face to face, hand in

hand, on each of the four sides of every column. Scenes of worship, of slaughter, of anointing, cover the walls; and the blank spaces are filled in as usual with hieroglyphic inscriptions. Among these Champollion discovered an imperfect list of the sons and daughters of Rameses the Second. Four gods once sat enthroned at the upper end of the sanctuary; but they have shared the fate of the colossi outside, and only their feet remain. The wall sculptures of this dark little chamber are, however, better preserved, and better worth preservation, than those of the hall. A procession of priests, bearing on their shoulders the bari, or sacred boat, is quite unharmed; and even the colour is yet fresh upon a full-length figure of Hathor close by.

But more interesting than all those—more interesting because more rare—is a sculptured palm-tree against which the king leans while making an offering to Ammon Ra. The trunk is given with elaborate truthfulness; and the branches, though formalised, are correct and graceful in curvature. The tree is but an accessory. It may have been introduced with reference to the date-harvests which are the wealth of the district; but it has no kind of sacred significance, and is noticeable only for the naturalness of the treatment. Such naturalness is unusual in the art of this period, when the conventional persea and the equally conventional lotus are almost the only vegetable forms that appear on the walls of the Temples. I can recall, indeed, but one similar instance in the bas-relief sculpture of the New Empire—namely, the bent, broken, and waving bulrushes in the great lion-hunting scene at Medinet Haboo, which are admirably free, and studied apparently from nature.

Coming out, we looked in vain along the courtyard walls for the battle-scene in which Champollion was yet able to trace the famous fighting lion of Rameses the Second, with the legend describing him as "the Servant of His Majesty rending his foes in pieces." But that was forty-five years ago. Now it is with difficulty that one detects a few vague outlines of chariot-wheels and horses.

There are some rock-cut tombs in the face of the cliffs close by. The Painter explored them while the Writer sketched the interior of the Temple; but he reported of them as mere sepulchres, unpainted and unsculptured.

The rocks, the sands, the sky, were at a white heat when we again turned our faces towards the river. Where there had so lately been a great multitude there was now not a soul. The palms nodded; the pigeons dozed; the mud town slept in the sun. Even the mother had gone from her place of weeping, and left her dead to the silence of the desert.

We went and looked at his grave. The fresh-turned sand was only a little darker than the rest, and but for the trampled foot-marks round about, we should scarcely have been able to distinguish the new mound from the old ones. All were alike nameless. Some, more cared for than the rest, were bordered with large stones and filled in with variegated pebbles. One or two were fenced about with a mud wall. All had a bowl of baked clay at the head. Wherever we saw a burial-ground in Nubia, we saw these bowls upon the graves. The mourners, they told us, mourn here for forty days; during which time they come every Friday and fill the bowls with fresh water, that the birds may drink from

it. The bowls on the other graves were dry and full of sand; but the new bowl was brimming full, and the water in it was hot to the touch.

We found L. and the Happy Couple standing at bay with their backs against a big lebbich tree, surrounded by an immense crowd and far from comfortable. Bent on "bazaaring," they had probably shown themselves too ready to buy; so bringing the whole population, with all the mats, baskets, nose-rings, finger-rings, necklaces and bracelets in the place, about their ears. Seeing the straits they were in, we ran to the Dahabeeyah and despatched three or four sailors to the rescue, who brought them off in triumph.

Even in Egypt, it does not answer, as a rule, to go about on shore without an escort. The people are apt to be importunate, and can with difficulty be kept at a pleasant distance. But in Nubia, where the traveller's life was scarcely safe fifty years ago, unprotected Ingleezeh are pretty certain to be disagreeably mobbed. The natives, in truth, are still mere savages *au fond*—the old war-paint being but half disguised under a thin veneer of Mohammedanism.

Some of the women who followed our friends to the boat, though in complexion as black as the rest, had light blue eyes and frizzy red hair, the effect of which was indescribably frightful. Both here and at Ibrim there are many of these "fair" families, who claim to be descended from Bosnian fathers stationed in Nubia at the time of the conquest of Sultan Selim in A.D. 1517. They are immensely proud of their alien blood, and think themselves quite beautiful.

All hands being safe on board, we pushed off at

once, leaving about a couple of hundred disconsolate dealers on the bank. A long-drawn howl of disappointment followed in our wake. Those who had sold, and those who had not sold, were alike wronged, ruined, and betrayed. One woman tore wildly along the bank, shrieking and beating her breast. Foremost among the sellers, she had parted from her gold brow-pendant for a good price; but was inconsolable now for the loss of it.

It often happened that those who had been most eager to trade, were readiest to repent of their bargains. Even so, however, their cupidity outweighed their love of finery. Moved once or twice by the lamentations of some dark damsel who had sold her necklace at a handsome profit, we offered to annul the purchase. But it invariably proved that, despite her tears, she preferred to keep the money.

The palms of Derr and of the rich district beyond, were the finest we saw throughout the journey. Straight and strong and magnificently plumed, they rose to an average height of seventy or eighty feet. These superb plantations supply all Egypt with saplings, and contribute a heavy tax to the revenue. The fruit, sundried and shrivelled, is also sent northwards in large quantities.

The trees are cultivated with strenuous industry by the natives, and owe as much of their perfection to laborious irrigation as to climate. The foot of each separate palm is surrounded by a circular trench into which the water is conducted by a small channel about fourteen inches in width. Every palm-grove stands in a network of these artificial runlets. The reservoir from which they are supplied is filled by means of a Sakkieh,

or water-wheel—a primitive and picturesque machine consisting of two wheels, the one set vertically to the river and slung with a chain of pots; the other a horizontal cog turned sometimes by a camel, but more frequently in Nubia by a buffalo. The pots (which go down empty, dip under the water, and come up full) feed a sloping trough which in some places supplies a reservoir, and in others communicates at once with the irrigating channels. These sakkiehs are kept perpetually going; and are set so close just above Derr, that the Writer counted a line of fifteen within the space of a single mile. There were probably quite as many on the opposite bank.

The sakkiehs creak atrociously; and their creaking ranges over an unlimited gamut. From morn till dewy eve, from dewy eve till morn, they squeak, they squeal, they grind, they groan, they croak. Heard after dark, sakkieh answering to sakkieh, their melancholy chorus makes night hideous. To sleep through it is impossible. Being obliged to moor a few miles beyond Derr, and having lain awake half the night, we offered a sakkieh-driver a couple of dollars if he would let his wheel rest till morning. But time and water are more precious than even dollars at this season; and the man refused. All we could do, therefore, was to punt into the middle of the river, and lie off at a point as nearly as possible equidistant from our two nearest enemies.

The native dearly loves the tree that costs him so much labour, and thinks it the *chef d'œuvre* of creation. When Allah made the first man, says an Arab legend, he found he had a little clay to spare; so with that he made the palm. And to the poor Nubian, at

all events, the gifts of the palm are almost divine; supplying food for his children, thatch for his hovel, timber for his water-wheel, ropes, matting, cups, bowls, and even the strong drink forbidden by the Prophet. The date-wine is yellowish-white, like whiskey. It is not a wine, however, but a spirit; coarse, fiery, and unpalatable.

Certain trees—as for instance the perky little pine of the German wald—are apt to become monotonous; but one never wearies of the palm. Whether taken singly or in masses, it is always graceful, always suggestive. To the sketcher on the Nile, it is simply invaluable. It breaks the long parallels of river and bank, and composes with the stern lines of Egyptian architecture as no other tree in the world could do.

“Subjects indeed!” said once upon a time an eminent artist to the present Writer; “fiddlesticks about subjects! Your true painter can make a picture out of a post and a puddle.”

Substitute a palm, however, for a post; combine with it anything that comes first—a camel, a shadoof, a woman with a water-jar upon her head—and your picture stands before you ready made.

Nothing more surprised me at first than the colour of the palm-frond, which painters of Eastern landscape are wont to depict of a hard, blueish tint, like the colour of a yucca leaf. Its true shade is a tender, bloomy, sea-green grey; difficult enough to match, but in most exquisite harmony with the glow of the sky and the gold of the desert.

The palm-groves kept us company for many a mile, backed on the Arabian side by long level ranges of sandstone cliffs horizontally stratified, like those of the

Thebaid. We now scarcely ever saw a village—only palms, and sakkiehs, and sandbanks in the river. The villages were there, but invisible; being built on the verge of the desert. Arable land is too valuable in Nubia for either the living to dwell upon or the dead to be buried in.

At Ibrim—a sort of ruined Ehrenbreitstein on the top of a grand precipice overhanging the river—we touched for only a few minutes, in order to buy a very small shaggy sheep that had been brought down to the landing-place for sale. But for the breeze that happened just then to be blowing, we should have liked to climb the rock, and see the view and the ruins—which are part modern, part Turkish, part Roman, and little, if at all, Egyptian.

There are also some sculptured and painted grottoes to be seen in the southern face of the mountain. They are, however, too difficult of access to be attempted by ladies. Alfred, who went ashore after quail, was drawn up to them by ropes; but found them so much defaced as to be scarcely worth the trouble.

We were now only thirty-four miles from Aboo Simbel; but making slow progress, and impatiently counting every foot of the way. The heat at times was great; frequent and fitful spells of Khamseen* wind alternating with a hot calm that tried the trackers sorely. Still we pushed forward, a few miles at a time; till by and by the flat-topped cliffs dropped out of sight and were again succeeded by volcanic peaks, some of which looked loftier than any of those about Dakkeh or Korosko.

* A hot South wind, like our Sirocco.

Then the palms ceased, and the belt of cultivated land narrowed to a thread of green; and at last there came an evening when we only wanted breeze enough to double two or three more bends in the river.

"Is it to be Aboo Simbel to-night?" we asked, for the twentieth time before going down to dinner.

To which Reïs Hassan replied, "Aiwah" (certainly).

But the pilot shook his head, and added, "Bookra" (to-morrow).

When we came up again, the moon had risen, but the breeze had dropped. Still we moved, impelled by a breath so faint that one could scarcely feel it. Presently even this failed. The sail collapsed; the pilot steered for the bank; the captain gave the word to go aloft—when a sudden puff from the north changed our fortunes, and sent us out again with a well-filled sail into the middle of the river.

None of us, I think, will be likely to forget the sustained excitement of the next three hours. As the moon climbed higher, a light more unreal than the light of day filled and overflowed the wide expanse of river and desert. We could see the mountains of Aboo Simbel standing as it seemed across our path, in the far distance—a lower one first; then a larger; then a series of receding heights, all close together, yet all distinctly separate.

That large one—the mountain of the Great Temple—held us like a spell. For a long time it looked a mere mountain like the rest. By and by, however, we fancied we detected a something—a shadow—such a shadow as might be cast by a gigantic buttress. Next appeared a black speck no bigger than a porthole.

We knew that this black speck must be the doorway. We knew that the great statues were there, though not yet visible; and that we must soon see them.

For our sailors, meanwhile, there was the excitement of a chase. The Bagstones and three other Dahabeeyahs were coming up behind us in the path of the moonlight. Their galley fires glowed like beacons on the water; the nearest about a mile away, the last, a spark in the distance. We were not in the mood to care much for racing to-night; but we were anxious to keep our lead and be first at the mooring-place.

To run upon a sandbank at such a moment was like being plunged suddenly into cold water. Our sail flapped furiously. The men rushed to the punting poles. Four jumped overboard, and shoved with all the might of their shoulders. By the time we got off, however, the other boats had crept up half-a-mile nearer; and we had hard work to keep them from pressing closer on our heels.

At length the last corner was rounded, and the Great Temple stood straight before us. The façade, sunk in the mountain-side like a huge picture in a mighty frame, was now quite plain to see. The black speck was no longer a porthole, but a lofty doorway.

Last of all, though it was night and they were still not much less than a mile away, the four colossi came out, ghostlike, vague, and shadowy, in the enchanted moonlight. Even as we watched them, they seemed to grow—to dilate—to be moving towards us out of the silvery distance.

It was drawing on towards midnight when the Philæ at length ran in close under the Great Temple. Content with what they had seen from the river, the

rest of the party then went soberly to bed; but the Painter and the Writer had no patience to wait till morning. Almost before the mooring-rope could be made fast, they had jumped ashore and begun climbing the bank.

They went and stood at the feet of the colossi, and on the threshold of that vast portal beyond which was darkness. The great statues towered above their heads. The river glittered like steel in the distance. There was a keen silence in the air; and towards the east the Southern Cross was rising. To the strangers who stood talking there with bated breath, the time, the place, even the sound of their own voices seemed unreal. They felt as if the whole scene must fade with the moonlight, and vanish before morning.

CHAPTER XV.

Rameses the Great.

THE central figure of Egyptian history has always been, probably always will be, Rameses the Second. He holds this place partly by right, partly by accident. He was born to greatness; he achieved greatness; and he had borrowed greatness thrust upon him. It was his singular destiny not only to be made a posthumous usurper of glory, but to be forgotten by his own name and remembered in a variety of aliases. As Sesosis, as Osymandias, as Sesostris, he became credited, in course of time, with all the deeds of all the heroes of the new Empire, beginning with Thothmes III., who preceded him by 300 years, and ending with Sheshonk, the captor of Jerusalem, who lived four centuries after him. Modern science, however, has repaired this injustice; and, while disclosing the long-lost names of a brilliant succession of sovereigns, has enabled us to ascribe to each the honours which are his due. We know now that some of these were greater conquerors than Rameses II. We suspect that some were better rulers. Yet the popular hero keeps his ground. What he has lost by interpretation on the one hand, he has gained by interpretation on the other; and the *beau sabreur* of the Third Sallier Papyrus remains to this day the representative Pharaoh of a line of monarchs whose history covers a space of fifty centuries, and

whose frontiers reached at one time from Mesopotamia to the ends of the Soudan.

The interest that one takes in Rameses II. begins at Memphis, and goes on increasing all the way up the river. It is a purely living, a purely personal, interest; such as one feels in Athens for Pericles, or in Florence for Lorenzo the Magnificent. Other Pharaohs but languidly affect the imagination. Thothmes and Amenhotep are to us as Darius or Artaxerxes—shadows that come and go in the distance. But with the second Rameses we are on terms of respectful intimacy. We seem to know the man—to feel his presence—to hear his name in the air. His features are as familiar to us as those of Henry the Eighth or Louis the Fourteenth. His cartouches meet us at every turn; and even to such as do not read the hieroglyphic character, those oft-recurring signs soon convey, by sheer force of association, the pompous style and title of Sun power of Truth, Approved of the Sun, Son of the Sun, Beloved of Ammon.

This being so, the traveller is ill equipped who goes through Egypt without something more than a mere guide-book knowledge of Rameses II. He is, as it were, content to read the Argument and miss the Poem. In the desolation of Memphis, in the shattered splendour of Thebes, he sees only the ordinary pathos of ordinary ruins. As for Aboo Simbel, the most stupendous historical record ever transmitted from the past to the present, it tells him a but half-intelligible story. Holding to the merest thread of explanation, he wanders from hall to hall, lacking altogether that potent charm of foregone association which no Murray can furnish. Your average Frenchman straying help-

lessly through Westminster Abbey under the conduct of the verger has about as vague a conception of the historical import of the things he sees.

What is true of the traveller is equally true of those who take their Nile vicariously "in connection with Mudie." If they are to understand any description of Aboo Simbel, they must first know something about Rameses II. Let us then, while the Philæ lies moored in the shadow of the rock of Abshek,* review, as summarily as may be, the leading facts of this important reign; such facts, that is to say, as are recorded in inscriptions, papyri, and other contemporary monuments.

Rameses the Second** was the son of Seti I., the second Pharaoh of the XIXth Dynasty, and of a cer-

* *Abshek*:—The hieroglyphic name of Aboo Simbel. *Gr. Aboccis*.

** In the present state of Egyptian chronology, it is hazardous to assign even an approximate date to events that happened before the conquest of Cambyses. The Egyptians, in fact, had no chronology in the strict sense of the word. Being without any fixed point of departure, such as the birth of Christ, they counted the events of each reign from the accession of the sovereign. Under such a system error and confusion were inevitable. To say when Rameses II. was born and when he died is impossible. The very century in which he flourished is uncertain. M. Mariette, taking the historical lists of Manetho for his basis, supposes the XIXth Dynasty to have occupied the interval comprised within B.C. 1462 and 1288; according to which computation (allowing 57 years for the reigns of Rameses I. and Seti I.) the reign of Rameses II. would date from B.C. 1405. Brugsch gives him from B.C. 1407 to B.C. 1341; and Lepsius places his reign in the sixty-six years lying between B.C. 1388 and B.C. 1322; these calculations being both made before the discovery of the stela of Abydos. Bunsen dates his accession from B.C. 1352; while the method adopted by Mr. Stuart Poole and others would bring the beginning of his reign fifty-nine years nearer still to our own epoch. Between the highest and the lowest of these calculations there is, as shown by the following table, a difference of 800 years:—

Rameses II. began to reign						B.C.
According to	{	Brugsch	.	.	.	1407
		Mariette	.	.	.	1405
		Lepsius	.	.	.	1388
		Bunsen	.	.	.	1352
		Poole	.	.	.	1283

tain Princess Tuaa, described on the monuments as "royal wife, royal mother, and heiress and sharer of the throne." She is supposed to have been of the ancient royal line of the preceding dynasty, and so to have had, perhaps, a better right than her husband to the double crown of Egypt. Through her, at all events, Rameses II. seems to have been in some sense born a king,* equal in rank, if not in power, with his father. He is believed to have succeeded to the throne while yet very young, and to have learned his first war-lesson in the lands south of the Cataract. The stela of Dak-keh,** which dates from the third year of his reign speaks of him as already terrible in battle; as "the bull powerful against Ethiopia, the griffin furious against the negroes, whose grip has put the mountaineers to flight." The events of his second campaign (undertaken two years later in order to reduce to obedience the revolted tribes of Syria and Mesopotamia) are immortalised in the poem of Pentaour.*** It was on this occasion that he fought his famous single-handed fight, against overwhelming odds, in the sight of both armies under the walls of Kades. Two years later, he carried fire and sword into the land of Canaan, and according to inscriptions yet extant upon the ruined pylons of the Ramesseum at Thebes, took, among other strong places on sea and shore, the fortresses of Ascalon and Jerusalem†.

The next important record transports us to the

* See Chap. VIII. footnote, p. 182, vol. 1.

** See Chap. VIII. p. 182, vol. 1.

*** *Ibid.* pp. 181, 182.

† L'an 8 de son règne, le roi prit la forteresse de Salem. C'est Salem, l'ancien nom de Jerusalem, qui designait cette ville avant que les Juifs l'eussent prise.—*Hist. d'Egypte*, BRUGSCH: 1st edition; Leipzig, 1859.

twenty-first year of his reign. Thirteen years have now gone by since the fall of Jerusalem, during which time a fluctuating frontier warfare has probably been carried on, to the exhaustion of both armies. Khetasira, Prince of Kheta, sues for peace. An elaborate treaty is thereupon framed, whereby the said Prince and "Rameses, Chief of Rulers, who fixes his frontiers where he pleases," pledge themselves to a strict offensive and defensive alliance, and to the maintenance of goodwill and brotherhood for ever. This treaty, we are told, was engraved for the Khetan prince "upon a tablet of silver adorned with the likeness of the figure of Sutech, the Great Ruler of Heaven;" while for Rameses Mer-Ammon it was sculptured on a wall adjoining the Great Hall at Karnak,* where it remains to this day.

According to the last clause of this curious document, the contracting parties enter also into an agreement to deliver up to each other the political fugitives of both countries; providing at the same time for the personal safety of the offenders. "Whosoever shall be so delivered up," says the treaty, "himself, his wives, his children, let him not be smitten to death, moreover, let him not suffer in his eyes, in his mouth, in his feet, moreover, let not any crime be set up against him."**

* This invaluable record is sculptured on a piece of wall which Mariette-Bey's latest plan of Karnak (see *Monuments of Upper Egypt*, translated by Alphons Mariette, Trübner & Co., London, 1877) shows to have formed part of the boundary-wall of a large hall now destroyed, but formerly standing at right angles to the south wall of the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak. The treaty faces to the west, and is situate about half-way between the famous bas-relief of Sheshonk and his captives, and the Karnak version of the poem of Pentaour. The former lies to the west of the southern portal; the latter to the east. The wall of the treaty juts out about sixty feet to the east of the portal. This south wall and its adjunct, a length of about 200 feet in all, is perhaps the most precious and interesting piece of sculptured surface in the world.

** See *Treaty of Peace between Rameses II. and the Hittites*, translated by C. W. Goodwin, M.A.—RECORDS OF THE PAST, vol. IV. p. 25.

This is the earliest instance of an extradition treaty upon record; and it is chiefly remarkable as an illustration of the clemency with which international law was at that time administered.

Finally, the convention between the sovereigns is placed under the joint protection of the gods of both countries:—"Sutech of Kheta, Ammon of Egypt, and all the thousand gods, the gods male and female, the gods of the hills, of the rivers, of the great sea, of the winds and the clouds, of the land of Kheta and of the land of Egypt."

The peace now concluded would seem to have remained unbroken throughout the rest of the long reign of Rameses the Second. We hear, at all events, of no more wars; and we find the king married by and by to a Khetan princess, who in deference to the gods of her adopted country takes the official name of Ra-maa-ur-nofre, or Sun-truth, Beautiful-exceedingly. The names of two other queens—Nofre-ari and Isi-nofre—are also found upon the monuments; to say nothing of a certain Princess-Queen, called Ba-ta-anta, of whom M. Pierret suggests, unpleasantly enough, that she was a daughter of Rameses wedded to her own father.

These three were probably the only legitimate wives of Rameses II., though he must also have been the lord of an extensive hareem. His family, at all events, as recorded upon the walls of the Temple at Wady Sabooah, amounted to no less than 170 children, of whom 111 were princes. This may have been but a small family for a great king three thousand years ago. It was but the other day, comparatively speaking, that Lepsius saw and talked with old Hasan, Kashef of Derr—the same petty ruler who gave so much trouble

to Belzoni, Burckhardt, and other early travellers—and he, like a patriarch of old, had in his day been the husband of sixty-four wives, and the father of something like 200 children.

For forty-six years after the making of the Khetan treaty, Rameses the Great lived at peace with his neighbours and tributaries. The evening of his life was long and splendid. It became his passion and his pride to found new cities, to raise dykes, to dig canals, to build fortresses, to multiply statues, obelisks, and inscriptions, and to erect the most gorgeous and costly temples in which man ever worshipped. To the monuments founded by his predecessors he made additions so magnificent that they dwarfed the designs they were intended to complete. He caused artesian wells to be pierced in the stony bed of the desert. He carried on the canal begun by his father, and opened a waterway between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. No enterprise was too difficult, no project too vast, for his ambition. "As a child," says the stela of Dakkeh,* "he superintended the public works, and his hands laid their foundations." As a man, he became the supreme Builder. Of his gigantic structures only certain colossal fragments have survived the ravages of time; yet those fragments are the wonder of the world.

To estimate the cost at which these things were done is now impossible. Every temple, every palace, represented a hecatomb of human lives. Slaves from Ethiopia, captives taken in war, Syrian immigrants settled in the Delta, were alike pressed into the service of the State. We know how the Hebrews suffered, and to what an extremity of despair they were reduced


* See Chap. VIII. p. 182. vol. I.

by the tasks imposed upon them. Yet even the Hebrews were less cruelly used than some who were kidnapped beyond the frontiers. Torn from their homes without hope of return, driven in herds to the mines, the quarries, and the brick-fields, these hapless victims were so dealt with that not even the chances of desertion were open to them. The negroes from the South were systematically drafted to the North; the Asiatic captives were transported to Ethiopia. Those who laboured underground were goaded on without rest or respite, till they fell down in the mines and died.

That Rameses II. was the Pharaoh of the captivity,* and that Menephthah, his son and successor, was the Pharaoh** of the Exodus, are now among the estab-

* "Les circonstances de l'histoire hébraïque s'appliquent ici d'une manière on ne peut plus satisfaisante. Les Hébreux opprimés batissaient une ville du nom de Ramsès. Ce récit ne peut donc s'appliquer qu'à l'époque où la famille de Ramsès était sur le trône. Moïse, contraint de fuir la colère du roi après le meurtre d'un Égyptien, subit un long exil, parceque le roi ne mourut *qu'après un temps fort long*; Ramsès II. regna en effet plus de 67 ans. Aussitôt après le retour de Moïse commença la lutte qui se termina par le célèbre passage de la Mer Rouge. Cet événement eut donc lieu sous le fils de Ramsès II., ou tout au plus tard pendant l'époque de troubles qui suivit son règne. Ajoutons que la rapidité des derniers événements ne permet pas de supposer que le roi eût sa résidence à Thèbes dans cet instant. Or, Merenptah a précisément laissé dans la Basse-Égypte, et spécialement à Tanis, des preuves importantes de son séjour."—De Rougé, *Notice des Monuments Égyptiennes du Rex de Chausée du Musée du Louvre*, Paris, 1875, p. 22.

"Il est impossible d'attribuer ni à Menephthah I., ni à Seti II., ni à Siptah, ni à Amonmesès, un règne même de vingt années; à plus forte raison de cinquante ou soixante. Seul, le règne de Ramsès II. remplit les conditions indispensables. Lors même que nous ne saurions pas que ce souverain a occupé les Hébreux à la construction de la ville de Ramsès, nous serions dans l'impossibilité de placer Moïse à une autre époque, à moins de faire table rase des renseignements bibliques."—*Recherches pour servir à l'Histoire de la XIX Dynastie*: F. Chabas; Paris 1873; p. 148.

** The Bible narrative, it has often been observed, invariably designates the King by this title, than which none, unfortunately, can be more vague for purposes of identification. "Plus généralement," says Brugsch, writing of the royal titles, "sa personne se cache sous une série d'expressions qui toutes ont le sens de la 'grande maison' ou du 'grand palais,' quelquefois au duel, des 'deux grandes maisons,' par rapport à la division de l'Égypte en deux parties. C'est du titre très fréquent  Per-âo, 'la grande maison,' 'la haute

lished facts of Egyptological science. The Bible and the monuments confirm each other upon these points, while both are again corroborated by the results of recent geographical and philological research. The "treasure-cities Pithom and Raamses" which the Israelites built for Pharaoh with bricks of their own making, are the Pa-Tum* and Pa-Rameses** of the inscriptions. It was from this last that Rameses II. set out with his army to attack the confederate princes then lying in ambush near Kades;*** and it was hither that he returned in triumph after the great victory. A con-

porte,' qu'on a heureusement dérivé le nom biblique *Pharao* donné aux rois d'Égypte."—*Histoire d'Égypte*, BRUGSCH: 2d edition, part 1., p. 35; Leipzig, 1875.

This probably is the only title under which it was permissible for the plebeian class to speak or write of the sovereign.

* Pa-Tum, or the city of Tum, is identified by Brugsch with Heracleopolis Parva, the chief town of the nome called by the Greeks *Sethroites*. Tum, or Atoum, was a solar god, and represented the unrisen sun. He preceded Ra in the order of the universe.

** Pa-Rameses. Authorities differ widely upon the site of this famous city. M. Chabas supposes it to be Pelusium, while Herr Brugsch identifies it with Tanis, the modern San, the Zoan of the Scriptures. The French engineers, however, finding at Tel-el-Mashoota a granite monolith inscribed with the cartouche of Rameses II., long since gave to that place the name of Rameses; a conclusion which seems likely to be borne out by the recent discoveries of M. Paponnet, the engineer at present engaged in the construction of the new fresh-water canal between Cairo and Suez. Some fine sphinxes are reported of as already exhumed from beneath a deep bed of alluvial deposit, and the temple to which they led will probably have been discovered by the time these pages are made public. The site of Tel-el-Mashoota is in many respects a likely one, being situate on the border of the ancient canal, and in the immediate neighbourhood of a considerable lake, which used formerly to be filled by the annual inundation. Pa-Rameses was a port, and close to a famous piece of water called Shet-Hor, or the Pool of Horus. Granted that Tel-el-Mashouta and Pa-Rameses are one, another possible identification suggests itself. The site of the nome called by the Greeks *Sethroites* has not yet been determined. Here Brugsch conjectures that the original Egyptian name may have been Set-ro-hata (the Land of the Mouths: *i. e.* the Tanitic, Pelusiatic, and Mendesian Mouths of the Nile). The present writer ventures, with the utmost diffidence, to submit that *Sethroites* may have been a Greek rendering of *Shet-Hor*. Pithom and Rameses being brought down some thirty miles farther inland than Tanis, it follows also that *Set-ro-hata* would cease to be an applicable derivation.

*** Kades, otherwise Katesh, Kadesh, or Atesch, a town on the Orontes, identified by Brugsch with Cadytis.—See *Geog. Inschriften*, Taf. XIX. 105, 1.

temporary letter written by one Panbesa, a clerk, describes in glowing terms the beauty and abundance of the royal city, and tells how the damsels stood at their doors in holiday apparel, with nosegays in their hands and sweet oil upon their locks, "on the day of the arrival of the War-God of the world." This letter is in the British Museum.*

Other letters written during the reign of Rameses II. are supposed to make direct mention of the Israelites.

"I have obeyed the orders of my master," writes the scribe Kauiser to his superior Bak-en-Pthah, "being bidden to serve out the rations to the soldiers, and also to the Hebrews who quarry stone for the palace of King Rameses Mer-Ammon." A similar document written by a scribe named Keniamon, and couched in almost the same words, shows them on another occasion to have been quarrying for a building on the southern side of Memphis; in which case Toora** would be the scene of their labours.

These invaluable letters, written on papyrus in the hieratic character, are in good preservation. They were found in the ruins of Memphis, and now form part of the treasures of the Museum of Leyden.***

* Anastasi Papyri, No. III., Brit. Mus.

** See Chap. III., p. 61. vol. 1.

*** See *Mélanges Egyptologiques*, by F. Chabas, 1 Série, 1862. There has been much discussion among Egyptologists on the subject of M. Chabas's identification of the Hebrews. The name by which they are mentioned in the papyri here quoted, as well as in an inscription in the quarries of Hamamat, is *Aperi-u*. A learned critic in the *Revue Archéologique* (vol. v. 2d série, 1862) writes as follows:—"La découverte du nom des Hébreux dans les hiéroglyphes serait un fait de la dernière importance; mais comme, aucun autre point historique n'offre peut-être une pareille séduction, il faut aussi se méfier des illusions avec un soin méticuleux. La confusion des sous R et L dans la langue égyptienne, et le voisinage des articulations B et P nuisent un peu, dans le cas particulier, à la rigueur des conclusions qu'on peut tirer de la transcription. Néanmoins, il y a lieu de prendre en considération ce fait que les *Aperi-u*, dans les trois documents qui nous parlent d'eux, sont montrés employés à des

They bring home to us with startling nearness the events and actors of the Bible narrative. We see the Israelites at their toil, and the overseers reporting them to the directors of public works. They extract from the quarry those huge blocks which are our wonder to this day. Harnessed to rude sledges, they drag them to the river-side and embark them for transport to the opposite bank.* Some are so large and so heavy that it takes a month to get them down from the mountain to the landing-place.** Other Israelites are elsewhere making bricks, digging canals, helping to build the great wall that reached from Pelusium to Heliopolis, and strengthening the defences not only of Pithom and Rameses, but of all the cities and forts between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. Their lot is hard; but not harder than the lot of other workmen. They are well fed. They intermarry. They increase and multiply. The season of their great oppression is not yet come. They make bricks, it is true, and those who are so employed must supply a

travaux de même espèce que ceux auxquels, selon l'Écriture, les Hébreux furent assujettis par les Égyptiens. La circonstance que les papyrus mentionnant ce nom ont été trouvés à Memphis, plaide encore en faveur de l'assimilation proposée—découverte importante qu'il est à désirer de voir confirmée par d'autres monuments." It should be added that the Aperiu also appear in the Inscription of Thothmes III. at Karnak, and are supposed by M. Mariette to be the people of Ephron. Dr. Birch is of opinion that there were two tribes of Aperiu, a greater and a lesser, or an upper and a lower tribe. This, however, would be consistent with the establishment of Hebrew settlers in the Delta, and others in the neighbourhood of Memphis.

* See the famous wall-painting of the Colossus on the sledge engraved in Sir G. Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*; frontispiece to vol. II., ed. 1871.

** In a letter written by a priest who lived during this reign (Rameses II.), we find an interesting account of the disadvantages and hardships attending various trades and pursuits, as opposed to the ease and dignity of the sacerdotal office. Of the mason he says—"It is the climax of his misery to have to remove a block of ten cubits by six, a block which it takes a month to drag by the private ways among the houses."—Sallier Pap., No. II., Brit. Musæ.

certain number daily; * but the straw is not yet withheld, and the task, though perhaps excessive, is not impossible.

For we are here in the reign of Rameses II., and the time when Menepthah shall succeed him is yet far distant. It is not till the King dies that the children of Israel sigh, "by reason of the bondage."

There are in the British Museum, the Louvre, and the Bibliothèque Nationale, some much older papyri than these two letters of the Leyden collection—some as old, indeed, as the time of Joseph—but none of such overwhelming historical interest. In these, the scribes Kauiser and Keniamon seem still to live and speak. What would we not give for a few more of their letters! These men knew Memphis in its glory, and had looked upon the face of Rameses the Great. They might even have seen Moses in his youth, while

* "Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves.

"And the tale of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them: ye shall not diminish ought thereof."—Exodus, chap. v. 7. 8.

M. Chabas says:—"Ces détails sont complètement conformes aux habitudes Égyptiennes. Le mélange de paille et d'argile dans les briques antiques a été parfaitement reconnu. D'un autre côté, le travail à la tâche est mentionné dans un texte écrit au revers d'un papyrus célébrant la splendeur de la ville de Ramsès, et datant, selon toute vraisemblance, du règne de Menepthah I. En voici la transcription:—'Compte des maçons, 12; en outre des hommes à mouler la brique dans leurs villes, amenés aux travaux de la maison. Eux à faire leur nombre de briques journellement; non ils sont à se relâcher des travaux dans la maison neuve; c'est ainsi que j'ai obéi au mandat donné par mon maître.'" See *Recherches pour servir à l'Histoire de la XIX. Dynastie*, par F. Chabas. Paris; 1873, p. 149.

The curious text thus translated into French by M. Chabas is written on the back of the papyrus already quoted (*i.e.* Letter of Panbesa, Anastasi Papyrus, No. III.), and is preserved in the British Museum. The wall-painting in a tomb of the XVIIIth Dynasty at Thebes, which represents foreign captives mixing clay, moulding, drying, and placing bricks, is well known from the illustration in Sir G. Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, ed. of 1871, vol. II. p. 196. Cases 61 and 62 in the First Egyptian Room, British Museum, contain bricks of mixed clay and straw stamped with the names of Rameses II.

yet he lived under the protection of his adopted mother, a prince among princes.

Kauiser and Keniamon lived, and died, and were mummied between three and four thousand years ago; yet these frail fragments of papyrus have survived the wreck of ages, and the quaint writing with which they are covered is as intelligible to ourselves as to the functionaries to whom it was addressed. That this writing should have reference to a subject race of whose keep and labour an accurate entry was necessarily kept by government scribes appointed for that purpose, is after all the least surprising part of the story. The Egyptians were eminently business-like. From the earliest epoch of which the monuments furnish record, we find an elaborate bureaucratic system in full operation throughout the country. Even in the time of the pyramid-builders, there are ministers of public works; inspectors of lands, lakes, and quarries; secretaries, clerks, and overseers innumerable.* From all these, we may be sure, were required strict accounts of their expenditure, as well as reports of the work done under their supervision. Specimens of their book-keeping are by no means rare. The Louvre is rich in memoranda of the kind; some relating to the date-tax; others to the transport and taxation of corn, the payment of wages, the sale and purchase of land for burial, and the like. If more news of the Hebrews should ever reach us from Egyptian sources, it will almost certainly be through the medium of documents such as these.

* "Les affaires de la cour et de l'administration du pays sont expédiées par les 'chefs' ou les 'intendants,' par les 'secrétaires' et par la nombreuse classe des scribes. . . . Le trésor rempli d'or et d'argent, et le divan des

An unusually long reign, the last forty-six years of which would seem to have been spent in peace and outward prosperity, enabled Rameses II. to indulge his ruling passion without interruption. To draw up anything like an exhaustive catalogue of his known architectural works would be equivalent to writing an itinerary of Egypt and Ethiopia under the XIXth Dynasty. His designs were as vast as his means appear to have been unlimited. From the Delta to Gebel Barkal, he filled the land with monuments dedicated to his own glory and the worship of the Gods. Upon Thebes, Abydos, and Tanis, he lavishes structures of surpassing magnificence. In Nubia, at the places now known as Gerf Hossayn, Wady Sabooah, Derr, and Abou Simbel, he was the author of temples and the founder of cities. These cities, which would probably be better described as provincial towns, have disappeared; and but for the mention of them in various inscriptions we should not even know that they had existed. Who shall say how many more have vanished, leaving neither trace nor record? A dozen cities of Rameses* may yet lie buried under some of those nameless mounds that follow each other in such quick succession along the banks of the Nile in Middle and Lower Egypt. Only yesterday, as it were, the re-

dépenses et des recettes avaient leurs intendants à eux. La chambre des comptes ne manque pas. Les domaines, les propriétés, les palais, et même les lacs du roi sont mis sous la garde d'inspecteurs. Les architectes du pharaon s'occupent de bâtisses d'après l'ordre du pharaon. Les carrières, à partir de celles du Mokattam (le Toora de nos jours) jusqu'à celles d'Assouan, se trouvent exploitées par des chefs qui surveillent le transport des pierres taillées à la place de leur destination. Finalement la corvée est dirigée par les chefs des travaux publics." *Histoire d'Égypte*, Brugsch: second edition, 1875; chap. v. pp. 34 and 35.

* The Pa-Rameses of the Bible narrative was not the only Egyptian city of that name. There was a Pa-Rameses near Memphis, and another Pa-Rameses at Abou Simbel, and there may probably have been many more.

mains of what would seem to have been a magnificent palace were accidentally discovered under the mounds of Tel-el-Yahoodeh,* about twelve miles to the N.E. of Cairo. There are probably fifty such mounds, none of which have been opened, in the Delta alone; and it is no exaggeration to say that there must be some hundreds between the Mediterranean and the First Cataract.

An inscription found of late years at Abydos shows that Rameses II. reigned over his great kingdom for the space of sixty-seven years. "It is thou," says Rameses IV., addressing himself to Osiris, "it is thou who wilt rejoice me with such length of reign as Rameses II., the great God, in his sixty-seven years. It is thou who wilt give me the long duration of this great reign."**

If only we knew at what age Rameses II. succeeded to the throne, we should, by help of this inscription, know also the age at which he died. No

* "Nothing of any interest had been found at Tel-el-Yahoodeh (the 'Mound of the Jews') till 1870, when the fellahs of the neighbourhood, while engaged in carrying away the brick-dust, which from the quantity of nitre it contains forms a valuable top-dressing to the soil, came across the remains of what had evidently been a magnificent palace. . . . The remains were apparently those of a large hall paved with white alabaster slabs. The walls were covered with a variety of bricks and encaustic tiles; many of the bricks were of most beautiful workmanship, the hieroglyphs in some being inlaid in glass. The capitals of the columns were inlaid with brilliant coloured mosaics, and a pattern in mosaics ran round the cornice. Some of the bricks are inlaid with the oval of Rameses II." See *Murray's Handbook for Egypt*, Route 7, p. 217.

Case D, in the Second Egyptian Room at the British Museum contains several of these tiles and terra-cottas, some of which are painted with figures of Asiatic and Negro captives, birds, serpents, etc.; and are extremely beautiful both as regards design and execution. Murray is wrong, however, in attributing the building to Rameses II. The cartouches are those of Rameses III.

** This tablet is votive, and contains in fact a long Pharisaic prayer offered to Osiris by Rameses IV. in the fourth year of his reign. The king enumerates his own virtues and deeds of piety, and implores the God to grant him length of days. See *Sur une Stèle inédite d'Abydos*, par P. Pierret. *Revue Archéologique*, vol. XIX. p. 273.

such record has, however, transpired. Brugsch, taking for his point of departure the vague preamble of the stela of Dakkeh,* assumes that he became king when about nine or ten years of age, according to which calculation he must have been about seventy-seven at the time of his death.

"Thou madest designs while yet in the age of infancy," says this inscription. "Thou wert a boy wearing the side-lock, and no monument was erected, and no order was given without thee. Thou wert a youth aged ten years, and all the public works were in thy hands, laying their foundations." These lines, translated literally, cannot, however, be said to prove much. They certainly contain nothing to show that this youth of ten was, at the time alluded to, sole king and ruler of Egypt. That he was titular king, in some hereditary sense, from his birth** and during the lifetime of his father, seems tolerably certain. That he should, as

* See *Histoire d'Égypte*: BRUGSCH. First edition, 1859, chap. VIII. p. 130.

** M. Mariette, in his great work on Abydos, has argued that Rameses II. was designated during the lifetime of his father by a cartouche signifying only *Ra-User-Ma*; and that he did not take the additional *Setp-en-Ra* till after the death of Seti I. The Louvre, however, contains a fragment of bas-relief representing the infant Rameses with the full title of his later years. This important fragment is thus described by M. Paul Pierret:—"Ramsés II. enfant, représenté assis sur le signe des montagnes *du*: c'est une assimilation au soleil levant lorsqu'il émerge à l'horizon céleste. Il porte la main gauche à sa bouche, en signe d'enfance. La main droite pend sur les genoux. Il est vêtu d'une longue robe. La tresse de l'enfance pend sur son épaule. Un diadème relie ses cheveux, et un uræus se dresse sur son front. Voici a traduction de la courte légende qui accompagne cette représentation. 'Le roi de la Haute et de Basse Égypte, maître des deux pays, *Ra-User-Ma Setp-en-Ra*, vivificateur, éternel comme le soleil.'" *Catalogue de la Salle Historique* P. PIERRET. Paris, 1873, p. 8.

M. Maspero is of opinion that this one fragment establishes the disputed fact of his actual sovereignty from early childhood, and so disposes of the entire question. See *L'Inscription dédicatoire du Temple d'Abydos, suivi d'un Essai sur la jeunesse de Sesostris*. G. MASPERO. 4^e Paris, 1867. See also Chap. VIII. (footnote), p. 182, vol. 1.

a boy, have designed public buildings and superintended their construction is extremely probable. The office was one that might well have been discharged by a crown-prince who delighted in architecture, and made it his peculiar study. It was, in fact, a very noble office—an office which from the earliest days of the ancient Empire had constantly been confided to princes of the royal blood;* but it carried with it no evidence of sovereignty. The presumption, therefore, would be that the inscription (dating as it does from the third year of the reign of Rameses II.) alludes to a time long since past, when the king as a boy held office under his father.

The same inscription, as we have already seen, makes reference to the victorious campaign in the South. Rameses is addressed as “the bull powerful against Ethiopia; the griffin furious against the negroes;” and that the events hereby alluded to must have taken place during the first three years of his reign is proved by the date of the tablet. Brugsch expressly says:—“Le jeune roi *débute* par des guerres contre les habitants de l’Ethiopie revoltée.”** According, then, to the method of calculation hitherto followed the king, if he came to the throne at nine or ten years of age, must have brought his first campaign to a close before he reached the age of thirteen.

Now the famous sculptures of the commemorative chapel at Bayt el Welly relate expressly to the events of this expedition; and as they are executed in that

* “Le métier d’architecte se trouvait confié aux plus hauts dignitaires de la cour pharaonique. Les architectes du roi, les *Myrket*, se recrutaient assez souvent parmi le nombre des princes.” *Histoire d’Egypte*: BRUGSCH. Second edition, 1875, chap. v. p. 34.

** *Histoire d’Egypte*: BRUGSCH. First edition, chap. VIII. 137.

refined and delicate style which especially characterises the bas-relief work of Goornah, of Abydos, of all those buildings which were either erected by Seti the First, or begun by Seti and finished during the early years of Rameses II., I venture to think we may regard them as contemporary, or very nearly contemporary with the scenes they represent. In any case, it is reasonable to conclude that the artists employed on the work would know something about the events and persons delineated, and that they would be guilty of no glaring inaccuracies.

What shall we say, however, when on referring to these same sculptures* we find this boyish conqueror, this lad of less than thirteen years of age, accompanied by his son, Prince Amenhisemif, who is of an age not only to bear his part in the field, but afterwards to conduct an important ceremony of state on the occasion of the submission and tribute-offering of the Ethiopian commander? Such, nevertheless, is the fact; as those who cannot go to Bayt el Welly may see and judge for themselves by means of the admirable casts of these great tableaux which line the walls of the Second Egyptian Room at the British Museum. To explain away Prince Amenhisemif would be difficult. We are accustomed to a certain amount of courtly exaggeration on the part of those who record with pen or pencil the great deeds of the Pharaohs. We expect to see the king always young, always beautiful, always victorious. It seems only right and natural that he should be never less than twenty, and sometimes more than sixty, feet in height. But that any flatterer should go so far as to credit a lad of thirteen with a

* See Rosellini, *Monumenti Storici*, pl. LXXI.

son at least as old as himself is surely quite incredible.

Lastly, there is the evidence of the Bible.

Joseph being dead and the Israelites established in Egypt, there comes to the throne a Pharaoh who takes alarm at the increase of this alien race, and who seeks to check their too rapid multiplication. He not only oppresses the foreigners, but ordains that every male infant born to them in their bondage shall be cast into the river. This Pharaoh is now universally believed to be Rameses II. Then comes the old, sweet, familiar Bible story that we know so well. Moses is born, cast adrift in the ark of bulrushes, and rescued by the King's daughter. He becomes to her "as a son." Although no dates are given, it is clear that the new Pharaoh has not been long upon the throne when these events happen. It is equally clear that he is no mere youth. He is old in the uses of state-craft; and he is the father of a princess of whom it is difficult to suppose that she was herself an infant.

On the whole, then, it seems reasonable to conclude that Rameses II., though in some way born a King, was not merely grown to manhood, but wedded, and the father of children already past the period of infancy, before he succeeded to the sole exercise of sovereign power.

Brugsch places the birth of Moses in the sixth year of the reign of Rameses II.* This may very well be.

* "Comme Ramsès II. regna 66 ans, le règne de son successeur sous lequel la sortie des Juifs eut lieu, embrassa la durée de 20 ans; et comme Moïse avait l'âge de 80 ans au temps de la sortie, il en résulte évidemment que les enfants d'Israël quittèrent l'Égypte une des ces dernières six années du règne de Menephthah; c'est à dire entre 1327 et 1321 avant l'ère chrétienne. Si nous admettons que ce pharaon périt dans la mer, selon le rapport

The fourscore years that elapsed between that time and the time of the Exodus correspond with sufficient exactness to the chronological data furnished by the monuments. Moses would thus see out the sixty-one remaining years of the King's long life, and release the Israelites from bondage towards the close of the reign of Menephthah,* who sat for about twenty years on the throne of his fathers. The correspondence of dates this time leaves nothing to be desired.

The Sesostris of Diodorus Siculus went blind, and died by his own hand; which act, says the historian, as it conformed to the glory of his life, was greatly admired by his people. We are here evidently in the region of pure fable. Suicide was by no means an Egyptian, but a classical virtue. Just as the Greeks hated age, the Egyptians revered it; and it may be doubted whether a people who seem always to have passionately desired length of days, would have seen anything to admire in a wilful shortening of that most precious gift of the gods. With the one exception of Cleopatra—the death of Nitocris the rosy-cheeked

biblrique, Moïse sera né 80 ans avant 1321, ou 1401 avant J. Chr, la *sixième* année du règne de Ramsès II."—*Hist. d'Égypte*: BRUGSCH. Chap. VIII. p. 157. First edition, Leipzig, 1859.

* If the Exodus took place, however, during the opening years of the reign of Menephthah, it becomes necessary either to remove the birth of Moses to a correspondingly earlier date, or to accept the amendment of Bunsen, who says "we can hardly take literally the statement as to the age of Moses at the Exodus *twice over* forty years." Forty years is the mode of expressing a generation, from thirty to thirty-three years. *Egypt's Place in Universal History*; BUNSEN, Lond. 1859. Vol. III. p. 184. That Menephthah did not himself perish with his host, seems certain. The final oppression of the Hebrews and the miracles of Moses, as narrated in the Bible, give one the impression of having all happened within a comparatively short space of time; and cannot have extended over a period of twenty years. Neither is it stated that Pharaoh perished. The tomb of Menephthah, in fact, is found in the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings (No. 8).

being also of Greek,* and therefore questionable, origin—no Egyptian sovereign is known to have committed suicide; and even Cleopatra who was half Greek by birth, must have been influenced to the act by Greek and Roman example. Dismissing then altogether this legend of his blindness and self-slaughter, it must be admitted that of the death of Rameses II., and of the place of his burial, we know nothing certain.

His tomb was excavated, or at least begun, in the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings. It has every appearance of being unfinished, and is choked with rubbish. The rubbish, in fact, looks like the débris of the excavation; as if the workmen had refilled the place when the work was abandoned. The Osymandias of Hecataeus was, however, interred in a magnificent building, the description of which corresponds in all essential points to the Ramesseum at Thebes. It seems possible, therefore, that Rameses II. may have begun the first tomb during the early years of his reign, and have afterwards abandoned it in favour of the most gorgeous mortuary temple the world has ever seen. Future excavations in the area of the Ramesseum, or the contents of some yet undiscovered papyrus, may hereafter solve this question.

Such are, very briefly, the leading facts of the history of this famous Pharaoh. Exhaustively treated, they would expand into a volume. Even then, however, one would ask, and ask in vain, what manner of man he was. Every attempt to evolve his personal character from these scanty data, is in fact a mere exercise of fancy.** That he was personally valiant may be gathered,

* HERODOTUS, Bk. II.

** Rosellini, for instance, carries hero-worship to its extreme limit when

with due reservation, from the poem of Pentaour; and that he was not unmerciful is shown in the extradition clause of the Khetan treaty. His pride was evidently boundless. Every Temple that he erected was a monument to his own glory; every colossus was a trophy; every inscription a pæan of self-praise. At Abou Simbel, at Derr, at Gerf Hossayn, he seated his own image in the sanctuary among the images of the gods.* There are even instances in which he is depicted under the twofold aspect of royalty and divinity—Rameses the Pharaoh burning incense before Rameses the Deity.

For the rest, it is safe to conclude that he was neither better nor worse than the general run of Oriental despots—that he was ruthless in war, prodigal in peace, rapacious of booty, and unsparing in the exercise of almost boundless power. Such pride and such despotism were, however, in strict accordance with immemorial precedent, and with the temper of the age in which he lived. The Egyptians would seem, beyond all doubt, to have believed that their King was always,

he not only states that Rameses the Great had, by his conquests, filled Egypt with luxuries that contributed alike to the graces of every-day life and the security of the state, but (accepting as sober fact the complimentary language of a triumphal tablet) adds that "universal peace even secured to him the love of the vanquished" (*l'universal pace assicurata dall' amore dei vinti stessi pel Faraone*)—*Mon. Storici*, vol. III. part II. p. 294. Bunsen, equally prejudiced in the opposite direction, can see no trait of magnanimity or goodness in one whom he loves to depict as "an unbridled despot, who took advantage of a reign of almost unparalleled length, and of the acquisitions of his father and ancestors, in order to torment his own subjects and strangers to the utmost of his power, and to employ them as instruments of his passion for war and building." *Egypt's Place in Universal History*; BUNSEN. Vol. III. bk. IV. part II, p. 184.

* "Souvent il s'introduit lui-même dans les triades divines auxquelles il dédie les temples. *Le soleil de Ramsès Mélamoun* qu'on aperçoit sur leur murailles, n'est autre chose que le roi lui-même déifié de son vivant." *Notice des Monuments Égyptiennes au Musée du Louvre*. DE ROUGÉ; Paris, 1875, p. 20.

in some sense, divine. They wrote hymns* and offered up prayers to him, and regarded him as the living representative of Deity. His princes and ministers habitually addressed him in the language of worship. Even his wives, who ought to have known better, are represented in the performance of acts of religious adoration before him. What wonder, then, if the man so deified believed himself a god?

* See *Hymn to Pharaoh* (Menephthah) translated by C. W. Goodwin, M.A. RECORDS OF THE PAST, vol. VI. p. 101.

CHAPTER XVI.

Aboo Simbel.

WE came to Aboo Simbel on the night of the 31st of January, and we left at sunset on the 18th of February. Of these eighteen clear days, we spent fourteen at the foot of the rock of the Great Temple, called in the old Egyptian tongue the Rock of Abshek. The remaining four (taken at the end of the first week and the beginning of the second) were passed in the excursion to Wady Halfeh and back. By thus dividing the time, our long sojourn was made less monotonous for those who had no especial work to do.

Meanwhile, it was wonderful to wake every morning close under the steep bank, and, without lifting one's head from the pillow, to see that row of giant faces so close against the sky. They showed unearthly enough by moonlight; but not half so unearthly as in the grey of dawn. At that hour, the most solemn of the twenty-four, they wore a fixed and fatal look that was little less than appalling. As the sky warmed, this awful look was succeeded by a flush that mounted and deepened like the rising flush of life. For a moment they seemed to glow—to smile—to be transfigured. Then came a flash, as of thought itself. It was the first instantaneous flash of the risen sun. It lasted less than a second. It was gone almost before one could say that it was there. The next moment, mountain, river, and sky were distinct in the steady light of day; and

the colossi—mere colossi now—sat serene and stony in the open sunshine.

Every morning I waked in time to witness that daily miracle. Every morning I saw those awful brethren pass from death to life, from life to sculptured stone. I brought myself almost to believe at last that there must sooner or later come some one sunrise when the ancient charm would snap asunder, and the giants arise and speak.

Stupendous as they are, nothing is more difficult than to see the colossi properly. Standing between the rock and the river, one is too near; stationed on the island opposite, one is too far off; while from the sand-slope only a side-view is obtainable. Hence, for want of a fitting standpoint, many travellers have seen nothing but deformity in the most perfect face handed down to us by Egyptian art. One recognises in it the negro, and one the Mongolian type;* while another admires the fidelity with which "the Nubian characteristics" have been seized.

* The late Vicomte E. de Rougé, in a letter to M. Guigniaut on the discoveries at Tanis, believes that he detects the Semitic type in the portraits of Rameses II. and Seti I.; and even conjectures that the Pharaohs of the XIXth dynasty may have descended from Hyksos ancestors:—"L'origine de la famille des Ramsés nous est jusqu'ici complètement inconnue: sa prédilection pour le dieu *Set* ou *Sutech*, qui éclate dès l'abord par le nom de *Séti* ¹⁸⁶⁰ (*Sethos*), ainsi que d'autres indices, pouvaient déjà engager à la reporter vers la Basse Egypte. Nous savions même que Ramsés II. avait épousé une fille du prince de Khet, quand le traité de l'an 22 eut ramené la paix entre les deux pays. Le profil très-décidément sémitique de Séti et de Ramsés se distinguait nettement des figures ordinaires de nos Pharaons Thébains." (See *Revue Archéologique*, vol. IX. A.D. 1864.) In the course of the same letter, M. de Rougé adverts to the magnificent restoration of the Temple of Sutech at Tanis (San) by Rameses II., and to the curious fact that the God is there represented with the peculiar head-dress worn elsewhere by the Prince of Khet.

It is to be remembered, however, that the patron deity of Rameses II. was Ammon Ra. His homage of Sutech (which might possibly have been a concession to his Khetan wife) seems to have been confined almost exclusively to Tanis, where Ra-ma-ur-nofre may be supposed to have resided.

Yet, in truth, the head of the young Augustus is not cast in a loftier mould. These statues are portraits—portraits of the same man four times repeated; and that man is Rameses the Great.

Now, Rameses the Great, if he was as much like his portraits as his portraits are like each other, must have been one of the handsomest men, not only of his own day, but of all history. Wheresoever we meet with him, whether in the fallen colossus at Memphis, or in the syenite torso of the British Museum, or among the innumerable bas-reliefs of Thebes, Abydos, Goornah, and Bayt-el-Welly, his features (though bearing in some instances the impress of youth, and in others of maturity) are always the same. The face is oval; the eyes are long, prominent, and heavy-lidded; the nose is slightly aquiline and characteristically depressed at the tip; the nostrils are open and sensitive; the under lip projects; the chin is short and square.

At Bayt-el-Welly, in a bas-relief commemorative of his first campaign, we see Rameses II. represented as a beardless youth with a delicate and Dantesque face, clutching a captive by the hair with one hand, while with the other he lifts his mace in act to slay. At Abydos he appears with a boyish beard, and apparently some three or four years older. But it is at Aboo Simbel, in the features of the Southernmost and most perfect of the seated colossi of the great Temple, that we learn to know him best. This last, whether regarded as a marvel of size or of portraiture, is the chef-d'œuvre of Egyptian sculpture. We here see the great king in his prime. His features are identical with those of the head at Bayt-el-Welly; but the con-

tours are more amply filled in, and the expression is altogether changed. The man is full fifteen or twenty years older. He has outlived that rage of early youth. He is no longer impulsive, but implacable. A godlike serenity, an almost superhuman pride, an immutable will, breathe from the sculptured stone. He has learned to believe his prowess irresistible, and himself almost divine. If he now raised his arm to slay, it would be with the stern placidity of a destroying angel.

The profile of the southernmost colossus can be correctly seen from but one point of view; and that point is where the sandslope meets the northern buttress of the façade, at a level just parallel with the beards of the statues. The sandslope is steep, and loose, and hot to the feet. More disagreeable climbing it would be hard to find, even in Nubia; but no traveller who refuses to encounter this small hardship need believe that he has seen the faces of the colossi.

Viewed from below, the face is fore-shortened out of all proportion. It looks unduly wide from ear to ear, while the lips and the lower part of the nose show relatively larger than the rest of the features. The same may be said of the great cast in the British Museum. Cooped up at the end of a narrow corridor and lifted not more than fifteen feet above the ground, it is carefully placed so as to be wrong from every point of view and shown to the greatest possible disadvantage.

The artists who wrought the original statues were, however, embarrassed by no difficulties of focus, daunted by no difficulties of scale. Giants themselves,

they summoned these giants from out the solid rock, and endowed them with superhuman strength and beauty. They sought no quarried blocks of syenite or granite for their work. They fashioned no models of clay. They took a mountain, and fell upon it like Titans, and hollowed and carved it as though it were a cherry-stone, and left it for the feebler men of after-ages to marvel at for ever. One great hall and fifteen spacious chambers they hewed out from the heart of it; then smoothed the rugged precipice towards the river, and cut four huge statues with their faces to the sunrise, two to the right and two to the left of the doorway, there to keep watch to the end of time.

These tremendous warders sit sixty-six feet high, without the platform under their feet. They measure across the chest 25 feet and 4 inches, from the shoulder to the elbow, 15 feet and 6 inches; from the inner side of the elbow joint to the tip of the middle finger, 15 feet; and so on, in relative proportion.* If they stood up, they would tower to a height of at least 83 feet, from the soles of their feet to the tops of their enormous double-crowns.

Nothing in Egyptian sculpture is perhaps quite so wonderful as the way in which these Aboo Simbel

* Not, however, in strict proportion, according to the canon discovered some years since by M. Charles Blanc, who found that the middle finger, taken as the unit of measurement, corresponded to one nineteenth of the total height of the body. The length of the middle finger of the Aboo Simbel colossi is exactly three feet, according to which standard the figures would measure only 57 feet in height without the head-dress. Counting, however, from the sole of the foot to the rise of the crown of the head inside the pschent, their actual height, if standing erect, would be full 66 feet, or 83 feet including the height of the pschent.

A close comparison, however, of certain figures drawn to scale in squares, some of which are found in tombs at Thebes, one at Memphis, and some in the portico at Kom Ombo, has satisfactorily proved that the canon of proportion varied from time to time. It was shorter in the Ptolemaic period than during the XVIIIth and XIXth dynasties.

artists dealt with the thousands of tons of material to which they here gave human form. Consummate masters of effect, they knew precisely what to do, and what to leave undone. These were portrait statues; therefore they finished the heads up to the highest point consistent with their size. But the trunk and the lower limbs they regarded from a decorative rather than a statuesque point of view. As decoration, it was necessary that they should give size and dignity to the façade. Everything, consequently, was here subordinated to the general effect of breadth, of massiveness, of repose. Considered thus, the colossi are a triumph of treatment. Side by side they sit, placid and majestic, their feet a little apart, their hands resting on their knees. Shapely though they are, those huge legs look scarcely inferior in girth to the great columns of Karnak. The articulations of the knee-joint, the swell of the calf, the outline of the *peroneus longus* are indicated rather than developed. The toenails and toe-joints are given in the same bold and general way; but the fingers, because only the tips of them could be seen from below, are treated *en bloc*.

The faces show the same largeness of style. The little dimple which gives such sweetness to the corners of the mouth, and the tiny depression in the lobe of the ear, are in fact, circular cavities as large as saucers. The nose measures 3 feet and a half in length; the mouth, so delicately curved, is about the same in width; even the sensitive nostril, which looks ready to expand with the breath of life, exceeds 8 inches in length. The ear (which is placed high, and is well detached from the head) measures 3 feet and 5 inches from top to tip.

A recent writer,* who brings sound practical knowledge to bear upon the subject, is of opinion that the Egyptian sculptors did not even "point" their work beforehand. If so, then the marvel is only so much the greater. The men who, working in so coarse and friable a material, could not only give beauty and finish to heads of this size, but could with barbaric tools hew them out *ab initio* from the natural rock, were the Michael Angelos of their age.

It has already been said that the last Rameses to the southward is the best preserved. His left arm and hand are injured, and the head of the uræus sculptured on the front of the pschent is gone; but with these exceptions the figure is as whole, as fresh in surface, as sharp in detail, as on the day it was completed. The next is shattered to the waist. His head lies at his feet, half buried in sand. The third is nearly as perfect as the first; while the fourth has lost not only the whole beard and the greater part of the uræus, but has both arms broken away, and a big, cavernous hole in the front of the body. From the double-crowns of the two last, the top ornament is

* *L'absence de points fouillés*, la simplification voulue, la restriction des détails et des ornements à quelques sillons plus ou moins hardis, l'engorgement de toutes les parties délicates, démontrent que les Egyptiens étaient loin d'avoir des procédés et des facilités inconnus."—*La Sculpture Egyptienne*, par EMILE SOLDI, p. 48.

"Un fait qui nous paraît avoir dû entraver les progrès de la sculpture, c'est l'habitude probable des sculpteurs ou entrepreneurs égyptiens d'entreprendre le travail à même sur la pierre, sans avoir préalablement cherché le modèle en terre glaise, comme on le fait de nos jours. Une fois le modèle fini, on le moule et on le reproduit mathématiquement définitive. Ce procédé a toujours été employé dans les grandes époques de l'art; et il ne nous a pas semblé qu'il ait jamais été en usage en Egypte."—*Ibid.*, p. 82.

M. Soldi is also of opinion that the Egyptian sculptors were ignorant of many of the most useful tools known to the Greek, Roman, and modern sculptors, such as the emery-tube, the diamond-point, etc. etc.

also missing. It looks a mere knob; but it measures eight feet in height.

Such an effect does the size of these four figures produce on the mind of the spectator, that he scarcely observes the fractures they have sustained. I do not remember to have even missed the head and body of the shattered one, although nothing is left of it above the knees. Those huge legs and feet covered with ancient inscriptions,* some of Greek, some of Phœnician origin, tower so high above the heads of those who look at them from below, that one scarcely thinks of looking higher still.

The figures are naked to the waist, and clothed in the usual striped tunic. On their heads they wear the double-crown, and on their necks rich collars of cabochon drops cut in very low relief. The feet are bare of sandals, and the arms of bracelets; but in the front of the body, just where the customary belt and buckle would come, are deep holes in the stone, such as might have been made to receive rivets, supposing the belts to have been made of bronze or gold. On the breast, just below the necklace, and on the upper part of each arm, are cut in magnificent ovals, between

* On the left leg of this colossus is the famous Greek inscription discovered by Messrs. Bankes and Salt. It dates from the reign of Psammetichus I., and purports to have been cut by a certain Damearchon, one of the 240,000 Egyptian troops of whom it is related by Herodotus (Book ii. chaps. 29, 30) that they deserted because they were kept in garrison at Syene for three years without being relieved. The inscription, as translated by Colonel Leake, is thus given in Rawlinson's Herodotus (vol. ii. p. 37):—"King Psamatichus having come to Elephantine, those who were with Psamatichus, the son of Theocles, wrote this. They sailed, and came to above Kerkis, to where the river rises . . . the Egyptian Amasis. . . . The writer is Damearchon the son of Amœbichus, and Pelephus Pelekos, the son of Udamus." The king Psamatichus here named has been identified with the Psamtik I. of the inscriptions. It was in his reign, and not as it has sometimes been supposed, in the reign of Psammetichus II., that the great military defection took place.


four and five feet in length, the ordinary cartouches of the king. These were probably tattooed upon his person in the flesh.

Some have supposed that these statues were originally coloured, and that the colour may have been effaced by the ceaseless shifting and blowing of the sand. Yet the drift was probably at its highest when Burckhardt discovered the place in 1813; and on the two heads that were still above the surface, he seems to have observed no traces of colour. Neither can the keenest eye detect any vestige of that delicate film of stucco which with the Egyptians invariably prepared their surfaces for painting. Perhaps the architects were for once content with the natural colour of the sandstone, which is here very rich and varied. It happens also that the colossi come in a light-coloured vein of the rock, and so sit relieved against a darker background. Towards noon, when the level of the façade has just passed into shade and the sunlight still strikes upon the statues, the effect is quite startling. The whole thing, which is then best seen from the island, looks like a huge onyx-cameo cut in high relief.

A statue of Ra, * to whom the temple is dedicated, stands some twenty feet high in a niche over the doorway, and is supported on either side by a bas-relief portrait of the king in an attitude of worship. Next above these comes a superb hieroglyphic inscription

* *Ra*, a solar divinity, generally represented with the head of a hawk, and the sun-disk on his head. "*Ra* veut dire *faire, disposer*; c'est, en effet, le dieu *Ra* qui a disposé, organisé le monde, dont la matière lui a été donnée par *Ptah*."—P. PIERRET: *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Égyptienne*.

"*Ra* est une autre des intelligences démiurgiques. *Ptah* avait créé le soleil; le soleil, à son tour, est le créateur des êtres, animaux et hommes. Il est à l'hémisphère supérieure ce qu'*Osiris* est à l'hémisphère inférieure. *Ra* s'incarne à Héliopolis."—A. MARIETTE: *Notice des Monuments à Boulak*, p. 123.

reaching across the whole front; above the inscription, a band of royal cartouches; above the cartouches, a frieze of sitting apes; above the apes, last and highest, some fragments of a cornice. The height of the whole may have been somewhat over a hundred feet. Wherever it has been possible to introduce them as decoration, we see the ovals of the king. Under those sculptured on the platforms and over the door, I observed the necklace, or collar () which, in conjunction with the sign known as the determinative of metals, signifies gold (Nub); but when represented, as here, without the determinative, stands for Nubia, the Land of Gold. This addition, which I do not remember to have seen elsewhere in connection with the cartouches of Rameses II.,* is here used in a heraldic sense, as signifying the sovereignty of Nubia.

The relative position of the two Temples of Aboo Simbel has been already described—how they are excavated in two adjacent mountains and divided by a cataract of sand. The front of the small Temple lies parallel to the course of the Nile, here flowing in a north-easterly direction. The façade of the Great Temple is cut in the flank of the mountain, and faces due east. Thus the colossi, towering above the shoulder of the sand-drift, catch, as it were, a side view of the small Temple and confront vessels coming up the river. As for the sand-drift, it curiously resembles the glacier of the Rhone. In size, in shape, in position, in all but colour and substance, it is the same. Pent in be-

* An instance occurs, however, in a small inscription sculptured on the rocks of the Island of Sehayl in the First Cataract, which records the second panegyry of the reign of Rameses II.—See *Récueil des Monuments*, etc.; BRUGSCH, vol. II., Planche LXXXII., Inscription No. 6.

tween the rocks at top, it opens out like a fan at bottom. In this its inevitable course, it slants downward across the façade of the Great Temple. For ever descending, drifting, accumulating, it wages the old stealthy war; and, unhasting, unresting, labours grain by grain to fill the hollowed chambers, and bury the great statues, and wrap the whole Temple in a winding-sheet of golden sand, so that the place thereof shall know it no more.

It had very nearly come to this when Burckhardt went up (A.D. 1813). The top of the doorway was then thirty feet below the surface. Whether the sand will ever reach that height again, must depend on the energy with which it is combated. It can only be cleared as it accumulates. To avert it is impossible. Backed by the illimitable wastes of the Libyan desert, the supply from above is inexhaustible. Come it must; and come it will, to the end of time.

The drift rose to the lap of the northernmost colossus and half-way up the legs of the next, when the Philæ lay at Aboo Simbel. The doorway was clear, however, almost to the threshold, and the sand inside was not more than two feet deep in the first hall. The whole façade, we were told, had been laid bare, and the interior swept and garnished, when the Empress of the French, after opening the Suez Canal in 1869, went up the Nile as far as the Second Cataract. By this time, most likely, that yellow carpet lies thick and soft in every chamber, and is fast silting up the doorway again.

How well I remember the restless excitement of our first day at Aboo Simbel! While the morning was yet cool, the Painter and the Writer wandered to and

frö, comparing and selecting points of view, and superintending the pitching of their tents. The Painter planted his on the very brink of the bank, face to face with the colossi and the open doorway. The Writer perched some forty feet higher on the pitch of the sandslope; so getting a side-view of the façade, and a peep of distance looking up the river. To fix the tent up there was no easy matter. It was only by sinking the tent-pole in a hole filled with stones, that it could be trusted to stand against the steady push of the north wind, which at this season is almost always blowing.

Meanwhile the travellers from the other Dahabee-yahs were tramping backwards and forwards between the two Temples; filling the air with laughter, and waking strange echoes in the hollow mountains. As the day wore on, however, they returned to their boats, which one by one spread their sails and bore away for Wady Halfeh.

When they were fairly gone and we had the marvellous place all to ourselves, we went to see the Temples.

The smaller one, though it comes first in order of sailing, is generally seen last; and seen therefore to disadvantage. To eyes fresh from the "Abode of Ra," the "Abode of Hathor" looks less than its actual size; which is in fact but little inferior to that of the Temple at Derr. A first hall, measuring some 40 feet in length by 21 in width, leads to a transverse corridor, two side-chambers, and a sanctuary 7 feet square, at the upper end of which are the shattered remains of a cow-headed statue of Hathor. Six square pillars, as at Derr, support what, for want of a better word, one

must call the ceiling of the hall; though the ceiling is in truth the superincumbent mountain.

In this arrangement, as in the general character of the bas-relief sculptures which cover the walls and pillars, there is much simplicity, much grace, but nothing particularly new. The façade, on the contrary, is a daring innovation. Here the whole front is but a frame for six recesses, from each of which a colossal statue, erect and life-like, seems to be walking straight out from the heart of the mountain. These statues, three to the right and three to the left of the doorway, stand thirty feet high, and represent Rameses II. and Nofreari, his queen. Mutilated as they are, the male figures are full of spirit, and the female figures full of grace. The Queen wears on her head the disk of Hathor and the ostrich feathers of royalty. The King is crowned with the pschent, and with a fantastic helmet adorned with plumes and horns. They have their children with them; the Queen her daughters, the King his sons—infants of ten feet high, whose heads just reach to the parental knee.

The walls of these six recesses, as they follow the slope of the mountain, form massive buttresses, the effect of which is wonderfully bold in light and shadow. The doorway gives the only instance of a porch that we saw in either Egypt or Nubia. The superb hieroglyphs that cover the faces of these buttresses and the front of this porch are cut half-a-foot deep into the rock, and are so large that they can be read from the island in the middle of the river. The tale they tell—a tale retold, in many varied turns of old Egyptian style upon the architraves within—is singular and interesting.

"Rameses, the Strong in Truth, the Beloved of Ammon," says the outer legend, "made this divine Abode* for his royal wife, Nofreari, whom he loves."

The legend within, after enumerating the titles of the King, records that "his royal wife who loves him, Nofreari the Beloved of Maut, constructed for him this Abode in the mountain of the Pure Waters."

On every pillar, in every act of worship pictured on the walls, even in the sanctuary, we find the names of Rameses and Nofreari "coupled and inseparable." In this double dedication, and in the unwonted tenderness of the style, one seems to detect traces of some event, perhaps of some anniversary, the particulars of which are lost for ever. It may have been a meeting; it may have been a parting; it may have been a prayer answered, or a vow fulfilled. We see, at all events, that Rameses and Nofreari desired to leave behind them an imperishable record of the affection which united them on earth, and which they hoped would reunite them in Amenti. What more do we need to know? We see that the Queen was fair;** that the

* Though dedicated by Rameses to Nofreari, and by Nofreari to Rameses, this Temple was placed, primarily, under the patronage of Hathor, the supreme type of divine maternity. She is represented by Queen Nofreari, who appears on the façade as the mother of six children, and adorned with the attributes of the goddess. A Temple to Hathor would also be, from a religious point of view, the fitting pendant to a Temple of Ra. M. Mariette, in his *Notice des Monuments à Boulak*, remarks of Hathor that her functions are still but imperfectly known to us. "Peut-être était-elle à Ra ce que Maut est à Ammon, le récipient où le dieu s'engendre lui-même pour l'éternité."

** It is not often that one can say of a female head in an Egyptian wall-painting that it is beautiful: but in these portraits of the Queen, many times repeated upon the walls of the first Hall of the Temple of Hathor, there is, if not positive beauty according to our western notions, much sweetness and much grace. The name of *Nofreari* means Perfect, Good, or Beautiful Companion. That the word *Nofre* or *Nefer* should mean both Good and Beautiful—in fact, that Beauty and Goodness should be synonymous terms—is not merely interesting as it indicates a lofty philosophical standpoint, but as it reveals, perhaps, the latent germ of that doctrine which was hereafter to be

King was in his prime. We divine the rest; and the poetry of the place at all events is ours. Even in these barren solitudes there is wafted to us a breath from the shores of old romance. We feel that Love once passed this way, and that the ground is still hallowed where he trod.

We hurried on to the Great Temple, without waiting to examine the lesser one in detail. A solemn twilight reigned in the first hall, beyond which all was dark. Eight colossi, four to the right and four to the left, stand ranged down the centre, bearing the mountain on their heads. Their height is twenty-five feet. With hands crossed on their breasts, they clasp the flail and crook; emblems of majesty and dominion. It is the attitude of Osiris, but the face is the face of Rameses II. Seen by this dim light, shadowy, mournful, majestic, they look as if they remembered the past.

Beyond the first hall lies a second hall supported on four square pillars; beyond this again, a transverse chamber, the walls of which are covered with coloured bas-reliefs of various Gods; last of all, the sanctuary. Here, side by side, sit four figures larger than life—Phthah, Ammon Ra, Ra, and Rameses deified. Before them stands an altar, in shape a truncated pyramid, cut from the solid rock. Traces of colour yet linger

taught with such brilliant results in the Alexandrian Schools. It is remarkable that the word for Truth and Justice (*Ma*) was also one and the same.

There is often a quaint significance about Egyptian proper names which reminds one of the names that came into favour in England under the Commonwealth. Take for instance *Bah-en Khonsu*, Servant-of-Khons; *Pa-du-amen*, the Gift of Ammon; *Renpitnofre*, Good-year; *Noub-en Tekh*, Worth-her-Weight-in-Gold (both women's names); and *Hor-mes-out'-a-Shu*, Horus-son-of-the-Eye-of-Shu—which last, as a tolerably long compound, may claim relationship with Praise-God-Barebones, Hew-Agag-in Pieces-before-the-Lord, etc. etc.

on the garments of the statues; while in the walls on either side are holes and grooves such as might have been made to receive a screen of metal-work.

The air in the sanctuary was heavy with an acrid smoke, as if the priests had been burning some strange incense and were only just gone. For this illusion we were indebted to the visitors who had been there before us. They had lit the place with magnesian wire; the vapour of which lingers long in these unventilated vaults.

To settle down then and there to a steady investigation of the wall-sculptures was impossible. We did not attempt it. Wandering from hall to hall, from chamber to chamber; now trusting to the faint gleams that straggled in from without, now stumbling along by the light of a bunch of candles tied to the end of a stick, we preferred to receive those first impressions of vastness, of mystery, of gloomy magnificence, which are the more profound for being somewhat vague and general.

Scenes of war, of triumph, of worship, passed before our eyes like the incidents of a panorama. Here the King, borne along at full gallop by plumed steeds gorgeously caparisoned, draws his mighty bow and attacks a battlemented fortress. The besieged, some of whom are transfixed by his tremendous arrows, supplicate for mercy. They are evidently Assyrian. Their skin is yellow; and they wear the long hair and beard, the fillet, the rich robe, fringed cape, and embroidered baldric with which we are familiar in the Nineveh sculptures. A man driving off cattle in the foreground looks as if he had stepped out of one of the tablets in the British Museum. Rameses meanwhile towers, swift

and godlike, above the crowd. His coursers are of such immortal strain as were the coursers of Achilles. His sons, his whole army, chariot and horse, follow headlong at his heels. All is movement and the splendour of battle.

Farther on, we see the King returning in state, preceded by his prisoners of war. Tied together in gangs, they stagger as they go, with heads thrown back and hands uplifted. These, however, are not Assyrians, but Abyssinians and Nubians, so true to the type, so thick-lipped, flat-nosed, and woolly-headed, that only the pathos of the expression saves them from being ludicrous. It is naturalness pushed to the verge of caricature.

A little farther still, and we find Rameses leading a string of these captives into the presence of Ammon Ra, Maut, and Khons—Ammon Ra weird and unearthly, with his blue complexion and towering plumes; Maut wearing the crown of Upper Egypt; Khons by a subtle touch of flattery depicted with the features of the King. Again, to right and left of the entrance, Ramses, thrice the size of life, slays a group of captives of various nations. To the left Ammon Ra, to the right Phra Harmachis,* approve and accept the sacrifice. In the second hall we see, as usual, the procession of the sacred bark. Pthah, Khem, and Pasht, gorgeous in many-coloured garments, gleam dimly, like figures in faded tapestry, from the walls of the transverse corridor.

But the wonder of Aboo Simbel is the huge subject on the north side of the Great Hall. This is a monster

* Phra, or Ra Harmachis, also called Har-em-Khou-ti, personifies the sun in his diurnal course from the eastern to the western horizon.

battle-piece which covers an area of 57 feet and 7 inches in length, by 25 feet 4 inches in height, and contains over 1100 figures. Even the heraldic cornice of cartouches and asps which runs round the rest of the ceiling is omitted on this side, so that the wall is literally filled with the picture from top to bottom.

Fully to describe this huge design would take many pages. It is a picture-gallery in itself. It represents not a single action but a whole campaign. It sets before us, with Homeric simplicity, the pomp and circumstance of war, the incidents of camp life, and the accidents of the open field. We see the enemy's city with its battlemented towers and triple moat; the besiegers' camp and the pavilion of the king; the march of infantry; the shock of chariots; the hand-to-hand *melée*; the flight of the vanquished; the triumph of the Pharaoh; the bringing in of the prisoners; the counting of the hands of the slain. A great river winds through the picture from end to end, and almost surrounds the invested city. The king in his chariot pursues a crowd of fugitives along the bank. Some are crushed under his wheels; some plunge into the water and are drowned.* Behind him, a moving wall of shields and spears, advances with rhythmic step the serried phalanx; while yonder, where the fight is thickest, we see chariots overturned, men dead and dying, and riderless horses making for the open. Meanwhile the besieged send out mounted scouts, and the country folk drive their cattle to the hills.

A grand frieze of chariots charging at full gallop divides the subject lengthwise, and separates the Egyptian camp from the field of battle. The camp is

* See chap. VIII., pp. 181-2, vol. I.

square, and enclosed, apparently, in a palisade of shields. It occupies less than one sixth part of the picture, and contains about a hundred figures. Within this narrow space the artist has brought together an astonishing variety of incidents. The horses feed in rows from a common manger, or wait their turn and impatiently paw the ground. Some are lying down. One, just unharnessed, scampers round the enclosure. Another, making off with the empty chariot at his heels, is intercepted by a couple of grooms. Other grooms bring buckets of water slung from the shoulders on wooden yokes. A wounded officer sits apart, his head resting on his hand; and an orderly comes in haste to bring him news of the battle. Another, hurt apparently in the foot, is having the wound dressed by a surgeon. Two detachments of infantry, marching out to reinforce their comrades in action, are met at the entrance to the camp by the royal chariot returning from the field. Rameses drives before him some fugitives, who are trampled down, seized, and despatched upon the spot. In one corner stands a row of objects that look like joints of meat; and near them are a small altar and a tripod brazier. Elsewhere, a couple of soldiers, with a big bowl between them, sit on their heels and dip their fingers in the mess, precisely as every Fellaah does to this day. Meanwhile it is clear that Egyptian discipline was strict, and that the soldier who transgressed was as abjectly subject to the rule of stick as his modern descendant. In no less than three places do we see this time-honoured institution in full operation, the superior officer energetically flourishing his staff; the private taking his punishment with characteristic disrelish. In the middle

of the camp, watched over by his keeper, lies Rameses' tame lion; while close against the royal pavilion a hostile spy is surprised and stabbed by the officer on guard. The pavilion itself is very curious. It is evidently not a tent but a building, and was probably an extemporaneous construction of crude brick. It has four arched doorways, and contains in one corner an object like a cabinet, with two sacred hawks for supporters. This object, which is in fact almost identical with the hieroglyphic emblem used to express a royal panegyry or festival, stands, no doubt, for the private oratory of the King. Five figures kneel before it in adoration.

To enumerate all or half the points of interest in this amazing picture would ask altogether too much space. Even to see it, with time at command and all the help that candles and magnesian torches can give, is far from easy. The relief is unusually low, and the surface, having originally been covered with stucco, is purposely roughened all over with tiny chisel-marks, which painfully confuse the details. Nor is this all. Owing to some kind of saline ooze in that part of the rock, the stucco has not only peeled off, but the actual surface is injured. It seems to have been eaten away, just as iron is eaten by rust. A few patches adhere, however, in places, and retain the original colouring. The river is still covered with blue and white zigzags, to represent water; some of the fighting groups are yet perfect; and two very beautiful royal chariots, one of which is surmounted by a richly ornamented parasol-canopy, are as fresh and brilliant as ever.

The horses throughout are excellent. The chariot frieze is almost Panathenaic in its effect of multitudi-

nous movement; while the horses in the camp of Rameses, for naturalness and variety of treatment, are perhaps the best that Egyptian art has to show. It is worth noting also that a horseman, that *rara avis*, occurs some four or five times in different parts of the picture.

The scene of the campaign is laid in Syria. The river of blue and white zigzags is the Orontes;* the city of the besieged is Kadesh or Kades;** the enemy are the Kheta. The whole is, in fact, a grand picture-epic of the events immortalised in the poem of Pentaour—that poem which M. de Rougé has described as “a sort of Egyptian Iliad.” The comparison would, however, apply to the picture with greater force than it applies to the poem. Pentaour, who was in the first place a courtier, and in the second place a poet, has sacrificed everything to the prominence of his central figure. He is intent upon the glorification of the King; and his poem, which is a mere pæan of praise, begins and ends with the prowess of Rameses Mer-Ammon. If, then, it is to be called an Iliad, it is an Iliad from which everything that does not immediately concern Achilles is left out. The picture, on the contrary, though it shows the hero in combat and in triumph, and always of colossal proportions, yet has space for a host of minor characters. The episodes in which these characters appear are essentially Homeric. The spy is surprised and slain, as Dolon was slain by Ulysses. The men feast, and fight, and are wounded,

* In Egyptian, *Aaranatu*.

** In Egyptian, *Kateshu*. “Aujourd'hui encore il existe une ville de Kades près d'une courbe de l'Oronte dans le voisinage de Homs.” *Leçons de M. de Rougé, Professeur au Collège de France*. See MÉLANGES D'ARCHÉOLOGIE, Egypt. and Assyr., vol. II. p. 269. The bend of the river is actually given in the bas-reliefs.

just like the long-haired sons of Achaia; while their horses, loosed from the yoke, eat white barley and oats

“Hard by their chariots, waiting for the dawn.”

Like Homer, too, the artist of the battle-piece is careful to point out the distinguishing traits of the various combatants. The Kheta go three in a chariot; the Egyptians only two. The Kheta wear a moustache and scalp-lock; the Egyptians pride themselves on “a clean shave,” and cover their bare heads with ponderous wigs. The Sardinian contingent cultivate their own thick hair, whiskers, and mustachios; and their features are distinctly European. They also wear the curious helmet, surmounted by a ball and two spikes, by which they may always be recognised in the sculptures. These Sardinians appear only in the border-frieze, next the floor. The sand had drifted up just at that spot, and only the top of one fantastic helmet was visible above the surface. Not knowing in the least to what this might belong, we set the men to scrape away the sand; and so, quite by accident, uncovered the most curious and interesting group in the whole picture. The Sardinians* (in Egyptian Shardana) seem to have been naturalised prisoners of war drafted

* “La légion *Sardana* de l’armée de Ramses II. provenait d’une première descente de ces peuples en Égypte. ‘Les *Sardaina* qui étaient des prisonniers de sa majesté,’ dit expressément le texte de Karnak, au commencement du poème de *Pentaour*. Les archéologues ont remarqué la richesse de leur costume et de leurs armures. Les principales pièces de leur vêtements semblent couverts de broderies. Leur bouchier est une rondache : ils portent une longue et large épée de forme ordinaire, mais on remarque aussi dans leurs mains une épée d’une longueur démesurée. Le casque des *Sardana* est très caractéristique : sa forme est arrondie, mais il est surmonté d’une tige qui supporte une boule de métal. Cet ornement est accompagné de deux cornes en forme de croissant. . . . Les *Sardana* de l’armée Égyptienne ont seulement des favoris et des moustaches coupés très courts.”—*Mémoire sur les Attaques Dirigées contre l’Égypte*, etc. etc. E. DE ROUGÉ. *Revue Archéologique*, vol. xvi. pp. 90, 91.

into the ranks of the Egyptian army; and are the first European people whose name appears on the monuments.

There is but one hour in the twenty-four at which it is possible to form any idea of the general effect of this vast subject; and that is at sunrise. Then only does the pure day stream in through the doorway, and temper the gloom of the side-aisles with light reflected from the sunlit floor. The broad divisions of the picture and the distribution of the masses may then be dimly seen. The details, however, require candle-light, and can only be studied a few inches at a time. Even so, it is difficult to make out the upper groups without the help of a ladder. Salame, mounted on a chair and provided with two long sticks lashed together, could barely hold his little torch high enough to enable the Writer to copy the inscription on the middle tower of the fortress of Kades.

It is fine to see the sunrise on the front of the Great Temple; but something still finer takes place on certain mornings in the year, in the very heart of the mountain. As the sun comes up above the eastern hill-tops, one long, level beam strikes through the doorway, pierces the inner darkness like an arrow, penetrates to the sanctuary, and falls like fire from heaven upon the altar at the feet of the Gods.

No one who has watched for the coming of that shaft of sunlight can doubt that it was a calculated effect, and that the excavation was directed at one especial angle in order to produce it. In this way Ra,* to whom the temple was dedicated, may be said to

* *Ra*, ou quelquefois *Horus*. C'est le dieu solaire par excellence."—A. MARIETTE. *Notice des Monuments à Boulak*, p. 123. See also footnote at p. 60. of this vol. It will be seen by the above that M. Mariette, who certainly knows more than any one in the world about the Egyptian Pantheon, admits that Ra

have entered in daily, and by a direct manifestation of his presence to have approved the sacrifices of his worshippers.

I need scarcely say that we did not see half the wall-sculptures or even half the chambers, that first afternoon at Aboo Simbel. We rambled to and fro, lost in wonder, and content to wonder, like rustics at a fair. We had, however, ample time to come again and again, and learn it all by heart. The Writer went in constantly, and at all hours; but most frequently at the end of the day's sketching, when the rest were walking or boating in the cool of the late afternoon.

It is a wonderful place to be alone in—a place in which the very darkness and silence are old, and in which Time himself seems to have fallen asleep. Wandering to and fro among these sculptured halls, like a shade among shadows, one seems to have left the world behind; to have done with the teachings of the present; to belong one's self to the past. The very Gods assert their ancient influence over those who question them in solitude. Seen in the fast-deepening gloom of evening, they look instinct with supernatural life. There were times when I should scarcely have been surprised to hear them speak—to see them rise from their painted thrones and come down from the walls. There were times when I felt I believed in them.

There was something so weird and awful about the place, and it became so much more weird and awful the farther one went in, that I rarely ventured beyond

and Horus are identical. This is important, and shows that the work of simplification foreseen by Ampère is now begun in earnest. The day is, perhaps, approaching when Khons will also be recognised as a form of Ra, Hathor as a version of Isis, etc. etc.

the first hall when quite alone. One afternoon, however, when it was a little earlier, and therefore a little lighter, than usual, I went to the very end, and sat at the feet of the Gods in the sanctuary. All at once (I cannot tell why, for my thoughts just then were far away) it flashed upon me that a whole mountain hung—ready, perhaps, to cave in—above my head. Seized by a sudden panic such as one feels in dreams, I tried to run; but my feet dragged, and the floor seemed to sink under them. I felt I could not have called for help, though it had been to save my life. It is unnecessary, perhaps, to add that the mountain did not cave in, and that I had my fright for nothing. It would have been a grand way of dying, all the same; and a still grander way of being buried.

My visits to the Great Temple were not always so dramatic. I sometimes took Salame, who smoked cigarettes when not on active duty, or held a candle while I sketched patterns of cornices, head-dresses of Kings and Gods, designs of necklaces and bracelets, heads of captives, and the like. Sometimes we explored the side-chambers. Of these there are eight; pitch-dark, and excavated at all kinds of angles. Two or three are surrounded by stone benches cut in the rock; and in one the hieroglyphic inscriptions are part cut, part sketched in black and left unfinished. As this temple is entirely the work of Rameses II., and betrays no sign of having been added to by any of his successors, these evidences of incompleteness would seem to show that the King died before the work was ended.

I was always under the impression that there were secret places yet undiscovered in these dark chambers, and Salame and I were always looking for them. At

Denderah, at Edfoo, at Medinet Haboot, at Philæ,* there have been found crypts in the thickness of the walls and recesses under the pavements, for the safe-keeping of treasure in time of danger. The rock-cut temples must also have had their hiding-places; and these would doubtless take the form of concealed cells in the walls, or under the floors of the side-chambers.

To come out from these black holes into the twilight of the Great Hall and see the landscape set, as it were, in the ebon frame of the doorway, was alone worth the journey to Aboo Simbel. The sun being at such times in the west, the river, the yellow sand-island, the palms and tamarisks opposite, and the mountains of the eastern desert, were all flooded with a glory of light and colour to which no pen or pencil could possibly do justice. Not even the mountains of Moab in Holman Hunt's "Scapegoat" were so warm with rose and gold.

Thus our days passed at Aboo Simbel; the workers working; the idlers idling; strangers from the outer world now and then coming and going. The heat on shore was great, especially in the sketching-tents; but the north breeze blew steadily every day from about an hour after sunrise till an hour before sunset, and on board the Dahabeeyah it was always cool.

The Happy Couple took advantage of this good wind to do a good deal of boating, and by judiciously timing their excursions, contrived to use the tail of the day's breeze for their trip out, and the strong arms of four good rowers to bring them back again. In this

* A rich treasure of gold and silver rings was found by Ferlini, in 1834, immured in the wall of one of the pyramids of Merœ, in Upper Nubia. See *Lepsius's Letters*, translated by L. and J. HORNER, Bohn, 1853, p. 151.

way they managed to see the little rock-cut Temple of Ferayg, which the rest of us unfortunately missed. On another occasion they paid a visit to a certain Sheyhk who lived at a village about two miles south of Aboo Simbel. He was a great man, as Nubian magnates go. His name was Hassan Ebn Rashwan el Kasheff, and he was a grandson of that same old Hassan Kasheff who was vice-regent of Nubia in the days of Burckhardt and Belzoni. He received our Happy Couple with distinguished hospitality, killed a sheep in their honour, and entertained them for more than three hours. The meal consisted of an endless succession of dishes, all of which, like that bugbear of our childhood, the hated Air with Variations, went on repeating the same theme under a multitude of disguises; and, whether roast, boiled, stewed or minced, served on skewers, smothered in rice, or drowned in sour milk, were always mutton *au fond*.

We now despaired of ever seeing a crocodile; and but for a trail that our men discovered on the island opposite, we should almost have ceased to believe that there were crocodiles in Egypt. The marks were quite fresh when we went to look at them. The creature had been basking high and dry in the sun, and this was the point at which he had gone down again to the river. The damp sand at the water's edge had taken the mould of his huge fleshy paws, and even of the jointed armour of his tail, though this last impression was somewhat blurred by the final rush with which he had taken to the water. I doubt if Robinson Crusoe, when he saw the famous footprint on the shore, was more excited than we of the Philæ at sight of this genuine and undeniable trail.

As for the Idle Man, he flew at once to arms and made ready for the fray. He caused a shallow grave to be dug for himself a few yards from the spot; then went and lay in it for hours together, morning after morning, under the full blaze of the sun,—flat, patient, alert,—with his gun ready cocked, and a Pall Mall Budget up his back. It was not his fault if he narrowly escaped sunstroke, and had his labour for his reward. That crocodile was too clever for him, and took care never to come back.

Our sailors, meanwhile, though well pleased with an occasional holiday, began to find Aboo Simbel monotonous. As long as the Bagstones stayed, the two crews met every evening to smoke, and dance, and sing their quaint roundelays together. But when rumours came of wonderful things already done this winter above Wady Halfeh—rumours that represented the Second Cataract as a populous solitude of crocodiles—then our faithful consort slipped away one morning before sunrise, and the Philæ was left companionless.

At this juncture, seeing that the men's time hung heavy on their hands, our Painter conceived the idea of setting them to clean the face of the northernmost Colossus, still disfigured by the plaster left on it when the great cast* was taken by Mr. Hay some fifty years

* This cast, the property of the British Museum, is placed over a door leading to the library at the end of the northern Vestibule, opposite the staircase. I was informed by the late Mr. Bonomi that the mould was made by Mr. Hay, who had with him an Italian assistant, picked up in Cairo. They took with them some barrels of plaster and a couple of ladders, and contrived, with such spars and poles as belonged to the Dahabeeyah, to erect a scaffolding and a matted shelter for the plasterman. The Colossus was at this time buried up to its chin in sand, which made their task so much the easier. When the mould of the head was brought to England, it was sent to Mr. Bonomi's studio, together with a mould of the head of the Colossus at Mitrahenny, a mould of the apex of the fallen obelisk at Karnak, and moulds of the wall-sculptures at

before. This happy thought was promptly carried into effect. A scaffolding of spars and oars was at once improvised, and the men, delighted as children at play, were soon swarming all over the huge head, just as the carvers may have swarmed over it in the days when Rameses was king.

All they had to do was to remove any small lumps that might yet adhere to the surface, and then tint the white patches with coffee. This they did with bits of sponge tied to the ends of sticks; but Reïs Hassan, as a mark of dignity, had one of the Painter's old brushes, of which he was immensely proud.

It took them three afternoons to complete the job; and we were all sorry when it came to an end. To see Reïs Hassan artistically touching up a gigantic nose almost as long as himself; Riskalli and the cook-boy staggering to and fro with relays of coffee, brewed "thick and slab" for the purpose; Salame perched cross-legged, like some complacent imp, on the towering rim of the great pschent overhead; the rest chattering and skipping about the scaffolding like monkeys, was, I will venture to say, a sight more comic than has ever been seen at Aboo Simbel before or since.

Rameses' appetite for coffee was prodigious. He consumed I know not how many gallons a day. Our cook stood aghast at the demand made upon his stores.

Bayt-el-Welly. Mr. Bonomi superintended the casting and placing of all these in the Museum about three years after the moulds were made. This was at the time when Mr. Hawkins held the post of Keeper of Antiquities. I mention these details, not simply because they have a special interest for all who are acquainted with Aboo Simbel, but because a good deal of misapprehension has prevailed on the subject, some travellers, attributing the disfigurement of the head to Lepsius, others to the Crystal Palace Company, and so forth. Even so careful a writer as the late Miss Martineau ascribes it, on hearsay, to Champollion.

Never before had he been called upon to provide for a guest whose mouth measured three feet and a half in width.

Still, the result justified the expenditure. The coffee proved a capital match for the sandstone; and though it was not possible wholly to restore the uniformity of the original surface, we at least succeeded in obliterating those ghastly splotches, which for so many years have marred this beautiful face as with the unsightliness of leprosy.

What with boating, fishing, lying in wait for crocodiles, cleaning the colossus, and filling reams of thin letter paper to friends at home, we got through the first week quickly enough—the Painter and the Writer working hard, meanwhile, in their respective ways; the Painter on his big canvas in front of the Temple; the Writer shifting her little tent as she listed.

Now, although the most delightful occupation in life is undoubtedly sketching, it must be admitted that the sketcher at Aboo Simbel works under difficulties. Foremost among these comes the difficulty of position. The great Temple stands within about twenty-five yards of the brink of the bank, and the lesser Temple within as many feet; so that to get far enough from one's subject is simply impossible. The present Writer sketched the small Temple from the deck of the Dahabeeyah; there being no point of view obtainable on shore.

Next comes the difficulty of colour. Everything, except the sky and the river, is yellow—yellow, that is to say, “with a difference;” yellow ranging through every gradation of orange, maize, apricot, gold, and buff. The mountains are sandstone; the Temples are

sandstone; the sandslope is powdered sandstone from the sandstone desert. In all these objects, the scale of colour is necessarily the same. Even the shadows, glowing with reflected light, give back tempered repetitions of the dominant hue. Hence it follows that he who strives, however humbly, to reproduce the facts of the scene before him, is compelled, *bon gré, mal gré*, to execute what some of our young painters would now-a-days call a Symphony in Yellow.

Lastly, there are the minor inconveniences of sun, sand, wind, and flies. The glare from above and the glare from below are alike intolerable. Dazzled, blinded, unable to even look at his subject without the aid of smoke-coloured glasses, the sketcher whose tent is pitched upon the sandslope over against the great Temple, enjoys a foretaste of cremation. When the wind blows from the north (which at this time of the year is almost always,) the heat is less distressing, but the sand is maddening. It fills your hair, your eyes, your water-bottles; silts up your colour-box; dries into your skies; and reduces your Chinese white to a gritty paste the colour of salad-dressing. As for the flies, they have a morbid appetite for water-colours. They follow your wet brush along the paper, leave their legs in the yellow ochre, and plunge with avidity into every little pool of cobalt as it is mixed ready for use. Nothing disagrees with them; nothing poisons them—not even olive-green.

It was a delightful time, however—delightful alike for those who worked and those who rested—and these small troubles counted for nothing in the scale. Yet it was pleasant, all the same, to break away for a day or two, and be off to Wady Halfeh.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Second Cataract.

A FRESH breeze, a full sail, and the consciousness of a holiday well earned, carried us gaily along from Aboo Simbel to Wady Halfeh. We started late in the afternoon of the first day, made about twelve miles before the wind dropped, and achieved the remaining twenty-eight miles before noon the next day. It was our last trip on the Nile under canvas. At Wady Halfeh the *Philæ* was doomed to be dismantled. The big sail that had so long been our pride and delight would there be taken down, and our good boat, her grace and swiftness gone at one fell swoop, would become a mere lumbering barge, more suggestive of civic outings on the Thames than of Cleopatra's galley.

For some way beyond Aboo Simbel, the western bank is fringed by a long line of volcanic mountains, as much alike in height, size, and shape, as a row of martello towers. They are divided from one another by a series of perfectly uniform sand-drifts; while on the rounded top of each mountain, thick as the currants on the top of a certain cake, known to school-boys by the endearing name of "black-caps," lies a layer of the oddest black stones in the world. Having more than once been to the top of the rock of Abshek (which is the first large mountain of the chain, and strewn in the same way) we recognised the stones, and knew what they were like. In colour they are purplish

black, tinged here and there with dull red. They ring like clinkstone when struck, and in shape are most fantastic. L. picked up some like petrified bunches of grapes. Others are twisted and writhen like the Vesuvian lava of 1871. They lie loose upon the surface, and are of all sizes; some being as small as currants, and others as large as quartern loaves. Speaking as one having no kind of authority, I should say that these stones are unquestionably of fiery parentage. One seems to see how, boiling and bubbling in a state of fusion, they must have been suddenly checked by contact with some cooler medium.

Where the chain ends, about three or four miles above Aboo Simbel, the view widens, and a host of outlying mountains are seen scattered over an immense plain reaching for miles into the western desert. On the eastern bank, Kalat Adda,* — a huge, rambling

* "A castle, resembling in size and form that of Ibrim; it bears the name of Kalat Adda; it has been abandoned many years, being entirely surrounded by barren rocks. Part of its ancient wall, similar in construction to that of Ibrim, still remains. The habitations are built partly of stone, and partly of bricks. On the most elevated spot in the small town, eight or ten gray granite columns of small dimensions lie on the ground, with a few capitals near them of clumsy Greek architecture."—Burckhardt's *Travels in Nubia*, 1819, p. 38.

In a curious Arabic history of Nubia written in the tenth century A.D. by one Abdallah ben Ahmed ben Solaim of Assouan, fragments of which are preserved in the great work of Makrizy, quoted by Burckhardt and E. Quatremere (see footnote, p. 281. Vol. I.), there occurs the following remarkable passage:—"In this province (Nubia) is situated the city of Bedjrash, capital of Maris, the fortress of Ibrim, and another place called Adwa, which has a port, and is, they say, the birthplace of the sage Lokman and of Dhoul Noun. There is to be seen there a magnificent Birbeh"—("On y voit un *Berba magnifique*").—*Mémoires Géographiques sur l'Égypte*, etc. E. QUATREMERE, Paris 1811; vol. II. p. 8.

If Adwa and Adda are one and the same, it is possible that in this passage we find preserved the only comparatively modern indication of some great rock-cut temple, the entrance to which is now entirely covered by the sand. It is clear that neither Aboo Simbel (which is on the opposite bank, and some three or four miles north of Adda) nor Ferayg (which is also some way off, and quite a small place) can here be intended. That another temple exists somewhere between Aboo Simbel and Wady Halfeh, and is yet to be discovered, seems absolutely certain from the tenor of a large

Roman citadel, going to solitary ruin, on the last water-washed precipice to the left—brings the opposite range to a like end, and abuts on a similar plain, also scattered over with detached peaks. The scene here is desolately magnificent. A large island covered with palms divides the Nile in two branches, each of which looks as wide as the whole river. An unbounded distance opens away to the silvery horizon. On the banks there is no verdure; neither is there any sign of human toil. Nothing lives, nothing moves, save the wind and the river.

Of all the strange peaks we have yet seen, the mountains hereabout are the strangest. Alone or in groups, they start up here and there from the deserts on both sides, like the pieces on a chess-board. They are for the most part conical; but they are not extinct craters, such as are the volcanic cones of Korosko and Dakkeh. Seeing how they all rose to about the same

stela sculptured on the rock a few paces north of the smaller temple at Aboo Simbel. This stela, which is one of the most striking and elaborate there, represents an Egyptian gateway surmounted by the winged globe, and shows Rameses II. enthroned and receiving the homage of a certain Prince, whose name, as translated by Rosellini, is Rameses-Neniscti-Habai. The inscription, which is in sixteen columns and perfectly preserved, records the titles and praises of the King, and states how "he hath made a monumental abode for Horus, his father, Lord of Ha'm, excavating in the bowels of the rock of Ha'm to make him a habitation of many ages." We know nothing of the Rock of Ha'm (rendered Sciam by Rosellini), but it should no doubt be sought somewhere between Aboo Simbel and Wady Halfeh. "Qual sito precisamente dinotisi in questo nome di Sciam, io non saprei nel presente stato delle cose determinare: credo peraltro secondo varie luoghi delle iscrizioni che lo ricordano, che fosse situato sull' una o l'altra sponda del Nilo, nel paese compreso tra Wadi-halfa e Ibsambul, o poco oltre. E qui dovrebbe trovarsi il nominato speco di Horus, fino al presente occulto a noi."—ROSELLINI, *Letterpress to Monumento Storici*, vol. III., part II. p. 184. It would hence appear that the Rock of Ha'm is mentioned in other inscriptions.

The distance between Aboo Simbel and Wady Halfeh is only forty miles, and the likely places along the banks are but few. Would not the discovery of this lost Temple be an enterprise worthier the ambition of tourists, than the extermination of such few crocodiles as yet linger north of the Second Cataract?

height, and were alike capped with that mysterious *couche* of shining black stones, the Writer could not help fancying that, like the isolated Rocher de Corneille and Rocher de St. Michel at Puy, they might be but fragments of a rocky crust, rent and swept away at some infinitely remote period of the world's history, and that the level of their present summits might represent perhaps the ancient level of the plain.

As regards form, they are weird enough for the wildest geological theories. All taper more or less towards the top. One is four-sided, like a pyramid; another, in shape a truncated cone, looks as if crowned with a pagoda summer-house; a third seems to be surmounted by a mosque and cupola; a fourth is scooped out in tiers of arches; a fifth is crowned, apparently, with a cairn of piled stones; and so on with variations as endless as they are fantastic. A geologist might perhaps account for these caprices by showing how fire, and earthquake, and deluge, had here succeeded each other; and how, after being first covered with volcanic stones and then split into chasms, the valleys thus opened had by and by been traversed by torrents which wore away the softer parts of the rock and left the harder standing.

Some way beyond Kalat Adda, when the Aboo Simbel range and the palm island have all but vanished in the distance, and the lonely peak, called the Mountain of the Sun (Gebel esh-Shems), has been left far behind, we come upon a new wonder—namely, upon two groups of scattered tumuli, one on the eastern, one on the western bank. Not volcanic forms these; not even accidental forms, if one may venture to form an opinion from so far off. They are of various sizes;

some little, some big; all perfectly round and smooth, and covered with a rich greenish-brown alluvial soil. How did they come there? Who made them? What did they contain? The Roman ruin close by—the 240,000* deserters who must have passed this way—the Egyptian and Ethiopian armies that certainly poured their thousands along these very banks, and that might have fought many a battle on this open plain, suggest all kinds of possibilities, and fill one's head with visions of buried arms, and jewels, and cinerary urns. We are more than half-minded to stop the boat and land that very moment; but are content on second thoughts with promising ourselves that we will at least excavate one of the smaller hillocks on our way back.

And now, the breeze freshening and the Dahabeeyah tearing gallantly along, we leave the tumuli behind and enter upon a still more desolate region, where the mountains recede farther than ever, and the course of the river is interrupted by perpetual sandbanks.

On one of these sandbanks, just a few yards above the edge of the water, lay a log of drift-wood, apparently a battered old palm trunk, with some remnants of broken branches yet clinging to it; such an object, in short, as my American friends would very properly call a "snag."

Our pilot leaned forward on the tiller, put his finger to his lip, and whispered:—

"Crocodilo!"

The Painter, the Idle Man, the Writer, were all on deck, and not one believed him. They had seen too

* See footnote, p. 59 of this vol.

many of these snags already, and were not going to let themselves again be excited about nothing.

The pilot pointed to the cabin where L. and the Little Lady were indulging in that minor vice called afternoon tea.

"Sittèh!" said he, "call Sittèh! Crocodilo!"

We examined the object through our glasses. We laughed the pilot to scorn. It was the worst imitation of a crocodile that we had yet seen.

All at once the palm-trunk lifted up its head, cocked its tail, found its legs, set off running, wriggling, undulating down the slope with incredible rapidity, and was gone before we could utter an exclamation.

We three had a bad time when the other two came up and found that we had seen our first crocodile without them.

A sandbank which we passed next morning was scored all over with fresh trails, and looked as if it had been the scene of a crocodile-parliament. There must have been at least twenty or thirty members present at the sitting; and the freshness of the marks showed that they had only just dispersed.

A keen and cutting wind carried us along the last thirty miles of our journey. We had supposed that the farther south we penetrated, the hotter we should find the climate; yet now, strange to say, we were shivering in seal-skins, under the most brilliant sky in the world, and in a latitude more southerly than that of Mecca or Calcutta. It was some compensation, however, to run at full speed past the dullest of Nile scenery, seeing only sandbanks in the river; sand-hills and sand-flats on either hand; a disused shadoof or a skeleton boat rotting at the water's edge; a wind-

tormented Dôm-palm struggling for existence on the brink of the bank.

At a fatal corner about six miles below Wady Halfeh, we passed a melancholy flotilla of dismantled Dahabeeyahs—the Fostat, the Zenobia, the Alice, the Mansoorah—all alike weather-bound and laid up helplessly against the wind. The Mansoorah, with Captain and Mrs. E. on board, had been three days doing these six miles: at which rate of progress they might reasonably hope to reach Cairo in about a year and a month.

The palms of Wady Halfeh, blue with distance, came into sight at the next bend; and by noon the Philæ was once more moored alongside the Bagstones under a shore crowded with cangias, covered with bales and packing cases, and, like the shores of Mahatta and Assouan, populous with temporary huts. For here it is that traders going by water embark and disembark on their way to and fro between Dongola and the First Cataract.

There were three Temples—or at all events three ancient Egyptian buildings—once upon a time on the western bank over against Wady Halfeh. Now there are a few broken pillars, a solitary fragment of brick pylon, some remains of a flight of stone steps leading down to the river, and a wall of enclosure overgrown with wild pumpkins. These ruins, together with a rambling native Khan and a noble old sycamore, form a picturesque group backed by amber sand-cliffs, and mark the site of a lost city* belonging to the early days of Usurtasen III.

* “Un Second Temple, plus grand, mais tout aussi détruit que le précédent, existe un peu plus au sud, c'était le grand temple de la ville Égyptienne

The Second, or Great Cataract, begins a little way above Wady Halfeh and extends over a distance of many miles. It consists, like the First Cataract, of a succession of rocks and rapids, and is skirted for the first five miles or so by the sand-cliff ridge which, as I have said, forms a background to the ruins just opposite Wady Halfeh. This ridge terminates abruptly in the famous precipice known as the Rock of Abooseer. Only adventurous travellers bound for Dongola or Khartoom go beyond this point; and they, for the most part, take the shorter route across the desert from Korosko. L. and the Writer would fain have hired camels and pushed on as far as Semneh; which is a matter of only two days' journey from Wady Halfeh, and, for people provided with sketching tents, is one of the easiest of inland excursions.

One may go to the Rock of Abooseer by land or by water. The Happy Couple and the Writer took two native boatmen versed in the intricacies of the Cataract; and went in the felucca. L. and the Painter preferred donkeying. Given a good breeze from the right quarter, there is, as regards time, but little to choose between the two routes. No one, however, who has approached the Rock of Abooseer by water, and seen it rise like a cathedral front from the midst of that labyrinth of rocky islets—some like clusters of basaltic columns, some crowned with crumbling ruins, some bleak and bare, some green with wild pomegranate trees—can doubt which is the more picturesque.

de *Béhéni*, qui exista sur cet emplacement, et qui d'après l'étendu des débris de poteries répandus sur la plaine aujourd'hui déserte, parait avoir été assez grande."--Champollion, *Lettres écrites d'Égypte*, etc., ed. 1868; Letter IX.

Landing among the tamarisks at the foot of the cliff, we come to the spreading skirts of a sand-drift steeper and more fatiguing to climb than the sand-drift at Aboo Simbel. We do climb it, however, though somewhat sulkily, and finding the donkey-party perched upon the top, are comforted with draughts of ice-cold lemonade, brought in a goollah from Wady Halfeh.

The summit of the rock is a mere ridge, steep and overhanging towards east and south, and carved all over with autographs in stone. Some few of these are interesting; but for the most part they record only the visits of the illustrious-obscure. We found Belzoni's name; but looked in vain for the signatures of Burckhardt, Champollion, Lepsius, and Ampère.

Owing to the nature of the ground and the singular clearness of the atmosphere, the view from this point seemed to me to be the most extensive I had ever looked upon. Yet the height of the rock of Abooseer is comparatively insignificant. It would count but as a mole-hill, if measured against some Alpine summits of my acquaintance. I doubt whether it is as lofty as even the Great Pyramid. It is, however, a giddy place to look down from, and seems higher than it is.

It is hard, now that we are actually here, to realise that this is the end of our journey. The Cataract—an immense multitude of black and shining islets, among which the river, divided into hundreds of separate channels, spreads far and wide for a distance, it is said, of more than sixteen miles,—foams at our feet. Foams, and frets, and falls; gushing smooth and strong where its course is free; murmuring hoarsely where it is interrupted; now hurrying; now loitering; here eddying in oily circles; there lying in still pools unbroken

by a ripple; everywhere full of life, full of voices; everywhere shining to the sun. Northwards, where it winds away towards Aboo Simbel, we see all the fantastic mountains of yesterday on the horizon. To the east, still bounded by out-liers of the same disconnected chain, lies a rolling waste of dark and stony wilderness, trenched with innumerable valleys through which flow streams of sand. On the western side, the continuity of the view is interrupted by the ridge that ends with Abooseer. Southwards, the Libyan desert reaches away in one vast undulating plain; tawny, arid, monotonous; all sun; all sand; lit here and there with arrowy flashes of the Nile. Farthest of all, pale but distinct, on the outermost rim of the world, rise two mountain summits, one long, one dome-like. Our Nubians tell us that these are the mountains of Dongola. Comparing our position with that of the Third Cataract as it appears upon the map, we come to the conclusion that these ghost-like silhouettes are the summits of Mount Fogo* and Mount Arambo—two apparently parallel mountains situated on opposite sides of the river about ten miles below Hannek, and consequently about 145 miles, as the bird flies, from the spot on which we are standing.

In all this extraordinary panorama, so wild, so weird, so desolate, there is nothing really beautiful, except the colour. But the colour is transcendent. Never, even in Egypt, have I seen anything so tender, so transparent, so harmonious. I shut my eyes, and it all comes before me. I see the amber of the sands; the pink and pearly mountains; the Cataract rocks, all

* Mount Fogo, as shown upon Keith Johnston's map of Egypt and Nubia, would seem to be identical with the Ali Bersi of Lepsius.

black and purple and polished; the dull gray palms that cluster here and there upon the larger islands; the vivid verdure of the tamarisks and pomegranates; the Nile, a greenish brown flecked with yeasty foam; over all, the blue and burning sky, permeated with light, and palpitating with sunshine.

I made no sketch. I felt that it would be ludicrous to attempt it. And I feel now that any endeavour to put the scene into words is a mere presumptuous effort to describe the indescribable. Words are useful instruments; but, like the etching needle and the burin, they stop short at form. They cannot translate colour.

If a traveller pressed for time asked me whether he should or should not go as far as the Second Cataract, I think I should recommend him to turn back from Abou Simbel. The trip must cost four days; and if the wind should happen to be unfavourable either way, it may cost six or seven. The forty miles of river that have to be twice traversed are the dullerest on the Nile; the Cataract is but an enlarged and barren edition of the Cataract between Assouan and Philæ; and the great view, as I have said, has not that kind of beauty which attracts the general tourist.

It has an interest, however, beyond and apart from that of beauty. It rouses one's imagination to a sense of the greatness of the Nile. We look across a world of desert, and see the river still coming from afar. We have reached a point at which all that is habitable and familiar comes abruptly to an end. Not a village, not a bean-field, not a shadoof, not a sakkieh, is to be seen in the plain below. There is no sail on those dangerous waters. There is no moving creature on

those pathless sands. But for the telegraph wires* stalking, ghost-like, across the desert, it would seem as if we had touched the limit of civilisation, and were standing on the threshold of a land unexplored.

Yet for all this, we feel as if we were at only the beginning of the mighty river. We have journeyed well-nigh a thousand miles against the stream; but what is that to the distance which still lies between us and the Great Lakes? And how far beyond the Great Lakes must we seek for the Source that is even yet undiscovered?

We stayed at Wady Halfeh but one night, and paid but one visit to the Cataract. We saw no crocodiles, though they are still plentiful among these rocky islets. The M. B.'s, who had been here a week, were full of crocodile stories, and of Alfred's deeds of arms. He had stalked and shot a monster, two days before our arrival; but the creature had rushed into the water when hit, waving its tail furiously above its head, and had neither been seen nor heard of since.

Like Achilles, the crocodile has but one vulnerable spot; and this is a small unarmoured patch behind the forearm. He will take a good deal of killing even there unless the bullet finds its way to a vital part, or is of the diabolical kind called "explosive." Even when mortally wounded, he seldom drops on the spot. With his last strength, he rushes to the water and dies at the bottom.

After three days the carcase rises and floats, and our friends were now waiting in order that Alfred might bag his big game. Too often, however, the poor

* The wires in 1874 reached to Khartoom. They are now carried, I believe, as far as Sennar.

brute either crawls into a hole, or, in his agony, becomes entangled among weeds and comes up no more. For one crocodile bagged, a dozen regain the river, and after lingering miserably under water, die out of sight and out of reach of the sportsman.

While we were climbing the Rock of Abooseer, our men were busy taking down the big sail and preparing the Philæ for her long and ignominious journey down stream. We came back to find the mainyard laid along like a roof-tree above our heads; the sail rolled up in a huge ball and resting on the roof of the kitchen; the small aftersail and yard hoisted on the mainmast; the oars lashed six on each side; and the lower deck a series of yawning chasms, every alternate plank being taken up so as to form seats and standing places for the rowers.

Thus dismantled, the Dahabeeyah becomes, in fact, a galley. Her oars are now her chief motive power; and a crew of steady rowers (having always the current in their favour) can do thirty miles a day. When, however, a good breeze blows from the south, the small sail and the current are enough to carry the boat well along; and then the men reserve their strength for rowing by night, when the wind has dropped. Sometimes, when it is a dead calm and the rowers need rest, the Dahabeeyah is left to her own devices, and floats with the stream—now waltzing ludicrously in the middle of the river; now drifting sidewise like Mr. Winkle's horse; now sidling up to the east bank; now changing her mind and blundering over to the west; making upon an average about a mile and a half or two miles an hour, and presenting a pitiful spectacle of helpless imbecility. At other

times, however, the head wind blows so hard that neither oars nor current avail; and then there is nothing for it but to lie under the bank and wait for better times.

This was our sad case in going back to Aboo Simbel. Having struggled with no little difficulty through the first five-and-twenty miles, we came to a dead lock about half-way between Faras and Gebel esh-Shems. Carried forward by the stream, driven back by the wind, buffeted by the waves, and bumped incessantly by the rocking to and fro of the felucca, our luckless Philæ, after oscillating for hours within the space of a mile, was run at last into a sheltered nook, and there left in peace till the wind should change or drop.

Imprisoned here for a day and a half, we found ourselves, fortunately, within reach of the tumuli which we had already made up our minds to explore. Making first for those on the east bank, we took with us in the felucca four men to row and dig, a fire-shovel, a small hatchet, an iron bar, and a large wicker basket, which were the only implements we possessed. What we wanted both then and afterwards, and what no Dahabeeyah should ever be without, were two or three good spades, a couple of picks, and a crowbar.

Climbing to the top of one of the highest of these hillocks, we began by surveying the ground. The desert here is firm to the tread, flat, compact, and thickly strewn with pebbles. Of the fine yellow sand which characterises the Libyan bank, there is little to be seen, and that little lies like snow in drifts and clefts and hollows, as if carried thither by the wind. The tumuli, however, are mounded of pure alluvial

mould, smooth, solid, and symmetrical. We counted thirty-four of all sizes, from five to about five-and-thirty feet in height, and saw at least as many more on the opposite side of the river.

Selecting one of about eight feet high, we then set the sailors to work; and although it was impossible, with so few men and such insufficient tools, to cut straight through the centre of the mound, we at all events succeeded in digging down to a solid substratum of lumps of crude clay, evidently moulded by hand.

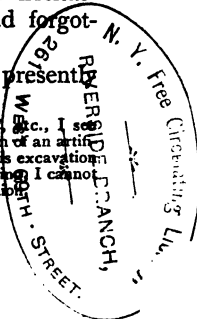
Whether these formed only the foundation of the tumulus, or concealed a grave excavated below the level of the desert, we had neither time nor means to ascertain. It was something, at all events, to have convinced ourselves that the mounds were artificial.*

As we came away, we met a Nubian peasant trudging northwards. He was leading a sorry camel; had a white cockerel under his arm; and was followed by a frightened woman, who drew her shawl over her face and cowered behind him, at sight of the Ingleezeh.

We asked the man what the mounds were, and who made them; but he shook his head, and said they had been there "from old time." We then inquired by what name they were known in these parts; to which, urging his camel forward, he replied hesitatingly that they had a name, but that he had forgotten it.

Having gone a little way, however, he presently

* On referring to Col. H. Vyse's *Voyage into Upper Egypt*, &c., I see that he also opened one of these tumuli, but "found no indication of an artificial construction." I can only conclude that he did not carry his excavation low enough. As it is difficult to suppose the tumuli made for nothing, I cannot help believing that they would repay a more systematic investigation.



turned back, saying that he now remembered all about it, and that they were called "The Horns of Yackma."

More than this we could not get from him. Who Yackma was, or how he came to have horns, or why his horns should take the form of tumuli, was more than he could tell or we could guess.

We gave him a small backsheesh, however, in return for this mysterious piece of information, and went our way with all possible speed; intending to row across and see the mounds on the opposite bank before sunset. But we had not calculated upon the difficulty of either threading our way among a chain of sandbanks, or going at least two miles farther north, so as to get round into the navigable channel at the other side. We of course tried the shorter way, and after running aground some three or four times, had to give it up, hoist our little sail, and scud homewards as fast as the wind would carry us.

The coming back thus, after an excursion in the felucca, is one of the many pleasant things that one has to remember of the Nile. The sun has set; the afterglow has faded; the stars are coming out. Leaning back with a satisfied sense of something seen or done, one listens to the old dreamy chant of the rowers, and to the ripple under the keel. The palms, meanwhile, glide past, and are seen in bronzed relief against the sky. Presently the big boat, all glittering with lights, looms up out of the dusk. A cheery voice hails from the poop. We glide under the bows. Half-a-dozen smiling brown faces bid us welcome, and as many pairs of brown hands are outstretched to help us up the side. A savoury smell is wafted from the

kitchen; a pleasant vision of the dining-saloon, with table ready spread and lamps ready lit, flashes upon us through the open doorway. We are at home once more. Let us eat, drink, rest, and be merry; for tomorrow the hard work of sight-seeing and sketching begins again.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Discoveries at Aboo Simbel.

WE came back to find a fleet of Dahabeeyahs ranged along the shore at Aboo Simbel, and no less than three sketching tents in occupation of the ground. One of these, which happened to be pitched on the precise spot vacated by our Painter, was courteously shifted to make way for the original tenant; and in the course of a couple of hours, we were all as much at home as if we had not been away for half-a-day.

Here, meanwhile, was our old acquaintance the "Fostat" with her party of gentlemen; yonder the "Zenobia," all ladies; the little "Alice" with Sir J. C. and Mr. W. on board; the "Sirena," flying the stars and stripes; the "Mansoorah," bound presently for the Fayoom. To these were next day added the "Ebers," with a couple of German savants; and the "Bagstones," welcome back from Wady Halfeh.

What with arrivals and departures, exchange of visits, exhibitions of sketches, and sociabilities of various kinds, we had now quite a gay time. The Philæ gave a dinner-party and fantasia under the very noses of the colossi, and every evening there was drumming and howling enough among the assembled crews to raise the ghosts of Rameses and all his Queens. This was pleasant enough while it lasted; but when the strangers dropped off one by one, and at the end of three days we were once more alone, I think we

were not sorry. The place was, somehow, too solemn for

“Singing, laughing, ogling, and all that.”

It was by comparing our watches with those of the travellers whom we met at Aboo Simbel, that we now found out how hopelessly our timekeepers and theirs had gone astray. We had been altering ours continually ever since leaving Cairo; but the sun was as continually putting them wrong again, so that we had lost all count of the true time. The first words with which we now greeted a new comer were—“Do you know what o’clock it is?” To which the stranger as invariably replied that it was the very question he was himself about to ask. The confusion became at last so great that, finding we had about eleven hours of day to thirteen of night, we decided to establish an arbitrary canon; so we called it seven when the sun rose, and six when it set, which answered every purpose.

It was between two and four o’clock, according to this time of ours, that the Southern Cross was now visible every morning. It is undoubtedly best seen at Aboo Simbel. The river is here very wide, and just where the constellation rises there is an opening in the mountains on the eastern bank, so that these four fine stars, though still low in the heavens, are seen in a free space of sky. If they make, even so, a less magnificent appearance than one has been led to expect, it is probably because we see them from too low a point of view. To say that a constellation is foreshortened sounds absurd; yet that is just what is the matter with the Southern Cross at Aboo Simbel. Viewed at an angle of about 30°, it necessarily looks distort and

dim. If seen burning in the zenith, it would no doubt come up to the level of its reputation.

It was now the fifth day after our return from Wady Halfeh, when an event occurred that roused us to an unwonted pitch of excitement, and kept us at high pressure throughout the rest of our time.

The day was Sunday; the date February 16th, 1874; the time, according to Philæ reckoning, about eleven a.m., when the Painter, enjoying his seventh day's holiday after his own fashion, went strolling about among the rocks. He happened to turn his steps southwards, and, passing the front of the Great Temple, climbed to the top of a little shapeless mound of fallen cliff, and sand, and crude-brick wall, just against the corner where the mountain slopes down to the river. Immediately round this corner, looking almost due south, and approachable by only a narrow ledge of rock, are two votive tablets sculptured and painted, both of the thirty-eighth year of Rameses II. We had seen these from the river as we came back from Wady Halfeh, and had remarked how fine the view must be from that point. Beyond the fact that they are coloured, and that the colour upon them is still bright, there is nothing remarkable about these inscriptions. There are many such at Aboo Simbel. Our Painter did not, therefore, come here to examine the tablets; he was attracted solely by the view.

Turning back presently, his attention was arrested by some much mutilated sculptures on the face of the rock, a few yards nearer the south buttress of the Temple. He had seen these sculptures before—so, indeed, had I, when wandering about that first day in search of a point of view—without especially remark-

ing them. The relief was low; the execution slight; and the surface so broken away that only a few confused outlines remained.

The thing that now caught the Painter's eye, however, was a long crack running transversely down the face of the rock. It was such a crack as might have been caused, one would say, by blasting.

He stooped—cleared the sand away a little with his hand—observed that the crack widened—poked in the point of his stick; and found that it penetrated to a depth of two or three feet. Even then, it seemed to him to stop, not because it encountered any obstacle, but because the crack was not wide enough to admit the thick end of the stick.

This surprised him. No mere fault in the natural rock, he thought, would go so deep. He scooped away a little more sand; and still the cleft widened. He introduced the stick a second time. It was a long palm-stick like an alpenstock, and it measured about five feet in length. When he probed the cleft with it this second time, it went in freely up to where he held it in his hand—that is to say, to a depth of quite four feet.

Convinced now that there was some hidden cavity in the rock, he carefully examined the surface. There were yet visible a few hieroglyphic characters and part of two cartouches, as well as some battered outlines of what had once been figures. The heads of these figures were gone (the face of the rock, with whatever may have been sculptured upon it, having come away bodily at this point), while from the waist downwards, they were hidden under the sand. Only some hands and arms, in short, could be made out.

They were the hands and arms, apparently, of four figures; two in the centre of the composition, and two at the extremities. The two centre ones, which seemed to be back to back, probably represented gods; the outer ones, worshippers.

All at once, it flashed upon the Painter that he had seen this kind of group many a time before—and *generally over a doorway.*

Feeling sure now that he was on the brink of a discovery, he came back; fetched away Salame and Mehemet Ali; and, without saying a syllable to any one, set to work with these two to scrape away the sand at the spot where the crack widened.

Meanwhile the luncheon bell having rung thrice, we concluded that the Painter had rambled off somewhere into the desert; and so sat down without him. Towards the close of the meal, however, came a pencilled note, the contents of which ran as follows:—

“Pray come immediately—I have found the entrance to a tomb. Please send some sandwiches—A. M'C.”

To follow the messenger at once to the scene of action, was the general impulse. In less than ten minutes we were there, asking breathless questions, peeping in through the fast-widening aperture, and helping to clear away the sand.

All that Sunday afternoon, heedless of possible sun-stroke, unconscious of fatigue, we toiled upon our hands and knees, as for bare life, under the burning sun. We had all the crew up, working like tigers. Every one helped; even the dragoman and the two maids. More than once, when we paused for a mo-

ment's breathing space, we said to each other:—"If those at home could see us, what would they say!"

And now, more than ever, we felt the need of implements. With a spade or two and a wheelbarrow, we could have done wonders; but with only one small fire-shovel, a birch broom, a couple of charcoal baskets, and about twenty pairs of hands, we were poor indeed. What was wanted in means, however, was made up in method. Some scraped away the sand; some gathered it into baskets; some carried the baskets to the edge of the cliff, and emptied them into the river. The Idle Man distinguished himself by scooping out a channel where the slope was steepest; which greatly facilitated the work. Emptied down this shoot and kept continually going, the sand poured off in a steady stream like water.

Meanwhile the opening grew rapidly larger. When we first came up—that is, when the Painter and the two sailors had been working on it for about an hour—we found a hole scarcely as large as one's hand, through which it was just possible to catch a dim glimpse of painted walls within. By sunset, the top of the doorway was laid bare, and where the crack ended in a large triangular fracture, there was an aperture about a foot and a half square, into which Mehemet Ali was the first to squeeze his way. We passed him in a candle and a box of matches; but he came out again directly, saying that it was a most beautiful *Birbeh*, and quite light within.

The Writer wriggled in next. She found herself looking down from the top of a sand-slope, into a small square chamber. This sand-drift, which here rose to within a foot and a half of the top of the doorway,

was heaped to the ceiling in the corner behind the door, and thence sloped steeply down, completely covering the floor. There was light enough to see every detail distinctly—the painted frieze running round just under the ceiling; the bas-relief sculptures on the walls, gorgeous with unfaded colour; the smooth sand, pitted near the top, where Mehemet Ali had trodden, but undisturbed elsewhere by human foot; the great gap in the middle of the ceiling, where the rock had given way; the fallen fragments on the floor, now almost buried in sand.

Satisfied that the place was absolutely fresh and untouched, the Writer crawled out, and the others, one by one, crawled in. When each had seen it in turn, the opening was barricaded for the night; the sailors being forbidden to enter it, lest they should injure the decorations.

That evening was held a solemn council, whereat it was decided that Talhamy and Reïs Hassan should go to-morrow to the nearest village, there to engage the services of fifty able-bodied natives. With such help, we calculated that the place might easily be cleared in two days. If it was a tomb, we hoped to discover the entrance to the mummy pit below; if but a small chapel, or Speos, like those at Ibrim, we should at least have the satisfaction of seeing all that it contained in the way of sculptures and inscriptions.

This was accordingly done; but we worked again next morning just the same till mid-day. Our native contingent, numbering about forty men, then made their appearance in a rickety old boat, the bottom of which was half full of water.

They had been told to bring implements; and they

did bring such as they had—two broken oars to dig with, some baskets, and a number of little slips of planking which, being tied between two pieces of rope and drawn along the surface, acted as scrapers, and were useful as far as they went. Squatting in double file from the entrance of the Speos to the edge of the cliff, and to the burden of a rude chant propelling these improvised scrapers, the men began by clearing a path to the doorway. This gave them work enough for the afternoon. At sunset, when they dispersed, the path was scooped out to a depth of four feet, like a miniature railway cutting between embankments of sand.

Next morning came the Sheykh in person, with his two sons and a following of a hundred men. This was so many more than we had bargained for, that we at once foresaw a scheme to extort money. The Sheykh, however, proved to be that same Rashwan Ebn Hassan el Kashef, by whom the Happy Couple had been so hospitably entertained about a fortnight before; we therefore received him with honour, invited him to luncheon, and, hoping to get the work done quickly, set the men on in gangs under the superintendence of Reïs Hassan and the head sailor.

By noon, the door was cleared down to the threshold, and the whole south and west walls were laid bare to the floor.

We now found that the débris which blocked the north wall and the centre of the floor was not, as we had at first supposed, a pile of fallen fragments, but one solid boulder which had come down bodily from above. To remove this was impossible. We had no tools to cut or break it, and it was both wider and

higher than the doorway. Even to clear away the sand which rose behind it to the ceiling would have taken a long time, and have caused inevitable injury to the paintings around. Already the brilliancy of the colour was marred where the men had leaned their backs, all wet with perspiration, against the walls.

Seeing, therefore, that three-fourths of the decorations were now uncovered, and that behind the fallen block there appeared to be no subject of great size or importance, we made up our minds to carry the work no further.

Meanwhile, we had great fun at luncheon with our Nubian Sheykh—a tall, well-featured man with much natural dignity of manner. He was well dressed, too, and wore a white turban most symmetrically folded; a white vest buttoned to the throat; a long loose robe of black serge; an outer robe of fine black cloth with hanging sleeves and a hood; and on his feet, white stockings and scarlet morocco shoes. When brought face to face with a knife and fork, his embarrassment was great. He was, it seemed, too grand a personage to feed himself. He must have a "feeder;" as the great man of the Middle Ages had a "taster." Talhamy accordingly, being promoted to this office, picked out choice bits of mutton and chicken with his fingers, dipped pieces of bread in gravy, and put every morsel into our guest's august mouth, as if the said guest were a baby.

The sweets being served, the Little Lady, L., and the Writer took him in hand, and fed him with all kinds of jams and preserved fruits. Enchanted with these attentions, the poor man ate till he could eat no

longer; then laid his hand pathetically over the region next his heart, and cried for mercy. After luncheon, he smoked his chibouque, and coffee was served. Our coffee did not please him. He tasted it, but immediately returned the cup, telling the waiter with a grimace, that the berries were burned and the coffee weak. When, however, we apologised for it, he protested with Oriental insincerity that it was excellent.

To amuse him was easy, for he was interested in everything; in L.'s field-glass, in the Painter's accordion, in the piano, and the lever corkscrew. With some Eau-de-Cologne he was also greatly charmed, rubbing it on his beard and inhaling it with closed eyes, in a kind of rapture. To make talk was, as usual, the great difficulty. When he had told us that his eldest son was Governor of Derr; that his youngest was five years of age; that the dates of Derr were better than the dates of Wady Halfeh; and that the Nubian people were very poor, he was at the end of his topics. Finally, he requested us to convey a letter from him to Lord D——, who had entertained him on board his Dahabeeyah the year before. Being asked if he had brought his letter with him, he shook his head, saying:—"Your dragoon shall write it."

So paper and a reed-pen were produced, and Talhamy wrote to dictation as follows:—

"God have care of you. I hope you are well. I am sorry not to have had a letter from you since you were here. Your brother and friend,

RASHWAN EBN HASSAN EL KASHEF."

A model letter this; brief, and to the point.

Our urbane and gentlemanly Sheykh was, however, not quite so charming when it came to settling time. We had sent at first for fifty men, and the price agreed upon was five piastres, or about a shilling English, for each man per day. In answer to this call, there first came forty men for half a day; then a hundred men for a whole day, or what was called a whole day; so making a total of six pounds due for wages. But the descendant of the Kashefs would hear of nothing so commonplace as the simple fulfilment of a straightforward contract. He demanded full pay for a hundred men for two whole days, a gun for himself, and a liberal backsheesh in cash. Finding he had asked more than he had any chance of getting, he conceded the question of wages, but stood out for a game-bag and a pair of pistols. Finally, he was obliged to be content with the six pounds for his men, and for himself two pots of jam, two boxes of sardines, a bottle of eau-de-Cologne, a box of pills, and half-a-sovereign.

By four o'clock he and his followers were gone, and we once more had the place to ourselves. So long as they were there it was impossible to do anything, but now, for the first time, we fairly entered into possession of our newly-found treasure.

All the rest of that day, and all the next day, we spent at work in and about the Speos. L. and the Little Lady took their books and knitting there, and made a little drawing-room of it. The Writer copied paintings and inscriptions. The Idle Man and the Painter took measurements and surveyed the ground round about, especially endeavouring to make out the

plan of certain fragments of wall, the foundations of which were yet traceable.

A careful examination of these ruins, and a little clearing of the sand here and there, led to further discoveries. They found that the Speos had been approached by a large outer hall built of sun-dried brick, with one principal entrance facing the Nile, and two side-entrances facing northwards. The floor was buried deep in sand and débris, but enough of the walls remained above the surface to show that the ceiling had been vaulted and the side-entrances arched.

The southern boundary wall of this hall, when the surface sand was removed, appeared to be no less than 20 feet in thickness. This was not in itself so wonderful, there being instances of ancient Egyptian crude-brick walls which measure 30 feet in thickness; but it was astounding as compared with the north, east, and west walls, which measured only 3 feet. Deeming it impossible that this mass could be solid throughout, the Idle Man set to work with a couple of sailors to probe the centre part of it, and it soon became evident that there was a hollow space about three feet in width running due east and west down not quite exactly the middle of the structure.

All at once the Idle Man thrust his fingers into a skull!

This was such an amazing and unexpected incident, that for the moment he said nothing, but went on quietly displacing the sand and feeling his way under the surface. The next instant his hand came in contact with the edge of a clay bowl, which he carefully withdrew. It measured about four inches in diameter, was hand-moulded, and full of caked sand. He now

proclaimed his discoveries, and all ran to help in the work. Soon a second and smaller skull was turned up, then another bowl, and then, just under the place from which the bowls were taken, the bones of two skeletons all detached, perfectly desiccated, and apparently complete. The remains were those of a child and a small grown person—probably a woman. The teeth were sound; the bones wonderfully delicate and brittle. As for the little skull (which had fallen apart at the sutures), it was pure and fragile in texture as the cup of a water-lily.

We laid the bones aside as we found them, examining every handful of sand, in the hope of discovering something that might throw light upon the burial. But in vain. We found not a shred of clothing, not a bead, not a coin, not the smallest vestige of anything that could help one to judge whether the interment had taken place a hundred years ago or a thousand.

We now called up all the crew, and went on excavating downwards into what seemed to be a long and narrow vault measuring some fifteen feet by three.

After-reflection convinced us that we had stumbled upon a chance Nubian grave, and that the bowls (which at first we absurdly dignified with the name of cinerary urns) were but the usual water-bowls placed at the heads of the dead. But we were in no mood for reflection at the time. We made sure that the Speos was a mortuary chapel; that the vault was a vertical pit leading to a sepulchral chamber; and that at the bottom of it we should find . . . who could tell what? Mummies, perhaps, and sarcophagi, and funereal gods, and jewels, and papyri, and wonders without end! That these uncared-for bones should be laid in

the mouth of such a pit, scarcely occurred to us as an incongruity. Supposing them to be Nubian remains, what then? If a modern Nubian at the top, why not an ancient Egyptian at the bottom?

As the work of excavation went on, however, the vault was found to be entered by a steep inclined plane. Then the inclined plane turned out to be a flight of much worn and very shallow stairs. These led down to a small square landing, some twelve feet below the surface, from which landing an arched doorway* and passage opened into the fore-court of the Speos. Our sailors had great difficulty in excavating this part, in consequence of the weight of superincumbent sand and débris on the side next the Speos. By shoring up the ground, however, they were enabled completely to clear the landing, which was curiously paved with cones of rude pottery like the bottoms of amphoræ. These cones, of which we took out some twenty-eight or thirty, were not in the least like the celebrated funereal cones found so abundantly at Thebes. They bore no stamp, and were much shorter and more lumpy in shape. Finally, the cones being all removed, we came to a compact and solid floor of baked clay.

The Painter, meanwhile, had also been at work. Having traced the circuit and drawn out a ground-plan, he came to the conclusion that the whole mass adjoining the southern wall of the Speos was in fact composed of the ruins of a pylon, the walls of which were seven feet in thickness, built in regular string-

* It was long believed that the Egyptians were ignorant of the principle of the arch. This, however, was not the case. There are brick arches of the time of Rameses II. behind the Ramesseum at Thebes, and elsewhere. Still, arches are rare in Egypt. We filled in and covered the arch again, and the greater part of the staircase, in order to preserve the former.

courses of moulded brick, and finished at the angles with the usual *torus*, or round moulding. The superstructure, with its chambers, passages, and top cornice, was gone; and this part with which we were now concerned was merely the basement, and included the bottom of the staircase.

The Painter's ground-plan demolished all our hopes at one fell swoop. The vault was a vault no longer. The staircase led to no sepulchral chamber. The brick floor hid no secret entrance. Our mummies melted into thin air, and we were left with no excuse for carrying on the excavations. We were mortally disappointed. In vain we told ourselves that the discovery of a large brick pylon, the existence of which had been unsuspected by preceding travellers, was an event of greater importance than the finding of a tomb. We had set our hearts on the tomb; and I am afraid we cared less than we ought for the pylon.

Having traced thus far the course of the excavations and the way in which one discovery led step by step to another, I must now return to the Speos, and, as accurately as I can, describe it, not only from my notes made on the spot, but by the light of such observations as I afterwards made among structures of the same style and period. I must, however, premise that, not being able to go inside while the excavators were in occupation, and remaining but one whole day at Aboo Simbel after the work was ended, I had but short time at my disposal. I would gladly have made coloured copies of all the wall-paintings; but this was impossible. I therefore was obliged to be content with transcribing the inscriptions and sketching a few of the more important subjects.

The rock-cut chamber which I have hitherto described as a Speos, and which we at first believed to be a tomb, was in fact neither the one nor the other. It was the adytum of a partly-built, partly-excavated monument coeval in date with the Great Temple. In certain points of design this monument resembles the contemporary Speos of Bayt el Welly. It is evident, for instance, that the outer halls of both were originally vaulted; and the much mutilated sculptures over the doorway of the excavated chamber at Aboo Simbel are almost identical in subject and treatment with those over the entrance to the excavated parts of Bayt el Welly. As regards general conception, the Aboo Simbel monument comes under the same head with the contemporary Temples of Derr, Gerf Hossayn, and Wady Sabooah; being in a mixed style which combines excavation with construction. This style seems to have been peculiarly in favour during the reign of Rameses II.

Situated at the south-eastern angle of the rock, a little way beyond the façade of the Great Temple, this rock-cut adytum and hall of entrance face S.E. by E., and command much the same view that is commanded higher up by the Temple of Hathor. The adytum, or excavated Speos, measures 21 feet 2½ inches in breadth by 14 feet 8 inches in length. The height from floor to ceiling is about 12 feet. The doorway measures 4 feet 3½ inches in width; and the outer recess for the doorframe, 5 feet. Two large circular holes, one in the threshold and the other in the lintel, mark the place of the pivot on which the door once swung.

It is not very easy to measure the outer hall in its present ruined and encumbered state; but as nearly as we could judge, its dimensions are as follows:—Length

25 feet; width $22\frac{1}{2}$ feet; width of principal entrance facing the Nile, 6 feet; width of two side entrances, 4 feet and 6 feet respectively; thickness of crude-brick walls, 3 feet. Engaged in the brickwork on either side of the principal entrance to this hall are two stone door-jambs; and some six or eight feet in front of these, there originally stood two stone hawks on hieroglyphed pedestals. One of these hawks we found *in situ*, the other lay some little distance off, and the Painter (suspecting nothing of these after-revelations) had used it as a post to which to tie one of the main ropes of his sketching tent. A large hieroglyphed slab, which I take to have formed part of the door, lay overturned against the side of the pylon some few yards nearer the river.

So far as we could see, there was no stone revêtement upon the inner side of the walls of the pronaos. If anything of the kind ever existed, some remains of it would probably be found by thoroughly clearing the area; an interesting enterprise for any who may have leisure to undertake it.

I have now to speak of the decorations of the adytum, the walls of which, from immediately under the ceiling to within three feet of the floor, are covered with religious subjects elaborately sculptured in bas-relief, coated as usual with a thin film of stucco, and coloured with a richness for which I know no parallel, except in the tomb of Seti I.* at Thebes. Above the level of the drifted sand, this colour was as brilliant in tone, and as fresh in surface, as on the day when it was transferred to those walls from the palette of the

* Commonly known as Belzoni's Tomb.

painter. All below that level, however, was dimmed and damaged.

The ceiling is surrounded by a frieze of cartouches supported by sacred asps; each cartouche, with its supporters, being divided from the next by a small sitting figure. These figures, in other respects uniform, wear the symbolic heads of various gods—the cow-head of Hathor, the ibis-head of Thoth, the hawk-head of Horus, the jackal-head of Anubis, etc. etc. The cartouches contain the ordinary style and title of Rameses II. (Ra-user-ma Sotep-en-Ra Rameses Mer-amen), and are surmounted by a row of sun-disks. Under each sitting god is depicted the phonetic hieroglyph signifying *Mer*, or Beloved. By means of this device, the whole frieze assumes the character of a connected legend, and describes the king not only as beloved of Ammon, but as Rameses beloved of Hathor, of Thoth, of Horus—in short, of each God depicted in the series.

These Gods excepted, the frieze is almost identical in design with the frieze in the first hall of the great Temple.

WEST WALL.*

The West, or principal wall, facing the entrance, is divided into two large subjects, each containing two figures the size of life. In the division to the right, Rameses II. worships Ra; in the division to the left, he worships Ammon Ra; thus following the order ob-

* I write of these walls, for convenience, as N., S., E., and W., as one is so accustomed to regard the position of buildings parallel with the river; but the present monument, as it is turned slightly southward round the angle of the rock, really stands S.E. by E., instead of east and west like the large Temple.

served in the other two temples, where the subjects relating to Ammon Ra occupy the left half, and the subjects relating to Ra occupy the right half, of each structure. An upright ensign surmounted by an exquisitely drawn and coloured head of Horus Aroëris separates these two subjects.* In the subject to the right, Rameses, wearing the red and white pschent, presents an offering of two small aryballos vases without handles. The vases are painted blue, and are probably intended to represent lapis lazuli; a substance much prized by the ancient Egyptians, and known to them by the name of *khesbet*. The King's necklace, armlets, and bracelets are also blue. Ra sits enthroned, holding in one hand the crux ansata (†) and in the other the greyhound-headed** sceptre of the Gods. He is hawk-headed, and crowned with the sun-disk and asp. His flesh is painted bright Venetian red. He wears a pectoral ornament; a rich necklace of alternate vermilion and black drops; and a golden-yellow belt studded with red and black stones. The throne, which stands on a blue platform, is painted in stripes of red, blue, and white. The platform is decorated with a row of gold-coloured stars and tau-crosses picked out with red. At the foot of this platform, between the God and the King, stands a small altar, on which are

* Horus Aroëris.—“Celui-ci, qui semble avoir été frère d'Osiris, porte une tête d'épervier coiffée du pschent. Il est presque complètement identifié avec le soleil dans la plupart des lieux où il était adoré, et il en est de même très souvent pour Horus, fils d'Isis.”—*Notice Sommaire des Monuments du Louvre*, 1873. DE ROUGÉ. In the present instance, this God seems to have been identified with Ra.

** “Le sceptre à tête de lévrier, nommé à tort sceptre à tête de coucoupha, était porté par les dieux.”—*Dic. d'Arch. Égyptienne*: P. PIERROT; Paris, 1875.

placed the usual blue lotus with red stalk, and a spouted vessel in form not unlike a coffee-pot.

To the left of the Horus ensign, seated back-to-back with Ra upon a similar throne, sits Ammon Ra—of all Egyptian Gods the most terrible to look upon—with his blue-black complexion, his corselet of golden chain-armour, and his head-dress of towering plumes.* Here the wonderful preservation of the surface enabled one to see by what means the ancient artists were wont to produce this singular blue-black effect of colour. It was evident that the flesh of the God had first been laid in with dead black, and then coloured over with a dry, powdery cobalt-blue, through which the black remained partially visible. He carries in one hand the crux ansata, and in the other the greyhound-headed sceptre.

To him advances the King, his right hand uplifted, and in his left a small basket containing a votive statuette that may represent Ma, the Goddess of Truth and Justice. If so, however, it is Ma shorn of her dis-

* Ammon of the blue complexion is the most ancient type of this God. He here represents divine royalty, in which character his title is:—"Lord of the Heaven, of the Earth, of the Waters, and of the Mountains." "Dans ce rôle de roi du monde, Amon a les chairs peintes en bleu pour indiquer sa nature céleste; et lorsqu'il porte le titre de Seigneur des Trônes, il est représenté assis, la couronne en tête: d'ordinaire il est debout."—*Étude des Monuments de Karnak*. DR ROUGE. *Mélanges d'Archéologie*, vol. I. 1873.

There were almost as many varieties of Ammon in Egypt as there are varieties of the Madonna in Italy or Spain. There was an Ammon of Thebes, an Ammon of Elephantine, an Ammon of Coptos, an Ammon of Chemmis (Panopolis), an Ammon of the Resurrection, Ammon of the Dew, Ammon of the Sun (Ammon Ra), Ammon Self-created, etc. etc. Ammon and Khem were doubtless identical. It is an interesting fact that our English words, chemical, chemist, chemistry, etc., which the dictionaries derive from the Arabic *al-kimia*, may be traced back a step farther to the Panopolitan name of this most ancient God of the Egyptians, Khem (Gr. Pan; Latin, Priapus), the deity of plants and herbs and of the creative principle. A cultivated Egyptian would, doubtless, have regarded all these Ammons as merely local or symbolical types of a single deity.

inctive feather, and holding the jackal-headed staff instead of the customary crux ansata.

As portraiture, there is not much to be said for any of these heads of Rameses II. The features bear a certain resemblance to the well-known profile of the King; but the effect altogether is formal and unsatisfactory. The action of the figure is, however, graceful and animated, and displays in all its purity the firm and flowing line of Egyptian draughtsmanship.

The dress of the King is very rich in colour; the mitre-shaped casque being of a vivid cobalt-blue* picked out with gold-colour; the belt, necklace, armlets, and bracelets, of gold, studded apparently with precious stones; the apron, green and gold. Over the King's head hovers the sacred vulture, emblem of Maut, holding in her claws a kind of scutcheon upon which is depicted the crux ansata.

* The material of this blue helmet, so frequently depicted on the monuments, *may* have been the Homeric Kuanos, about which so much doubt and conjecture have gathered, and which Mr. Gladstone supposes to have been a metal.—(See *Juventus Mundi*, chap. xv. p. 532.) A paragraph in *The Academy* (June 8, 1876) gives the following particulars of certain perforated lumps of a "blue metallic substance," discovered at Hissarlik by Dr. Schliemann, and there found lying under the copper shields to which they had probably been attached. "An analytical examination by Landerer (Berg. Hüttenm. Zeitung, xxxiv. 430) has shown them to be sulphide of copper. The art of colouring the metal was known to the coppersmiths of Corinth, who plunged the heated copper into the fountain of Peirene. It appears not impossible that this was a sulphur spring, and that the blue colour may have been given to the metal by plunging it in a heated state into the water and converting the surface into copper sulphide."

It is to be observed that the Pharaohs are almost always represented wearing this blue helmet in the battle-pieces, and that it is frequently studded with gold rings. It must therefore have been of metal. If not of sulphuretted copper, it may have been made of steel, which, in the well-known instance of the butcher's sharpener, as well as in representations of certain weapons, is always painted blue upon the monuments.

SOUTH WALL.

The subjects represented on this wall are as follows:—

1. Rameses, life-size, presiding over a table of offerings. The king wears upon his head the *klaft*, or head-cloth, striped gold and white, and decorated with the uræus. The table is piled in the usual way with flesh, fowl, and flowers. The surface being here quite perfect, the details of these objects are seen to be rendered with surprising minuteness. Even the tiny black feather-stumps of the plucked geese are given with the fidelity of Chinese art; while a red gash in the breast of each shows in what way it was slain for the sacrifice. The loaves are shaped precisely like the so-called "cottage-loaves" of to-day, and have the same little depression in the top, made by the baker's finger. Lotus and papyrus blossoms in elaborate bouquet-holders crown the pile.

2. Two tripods of light and elegant design, containing flowers.

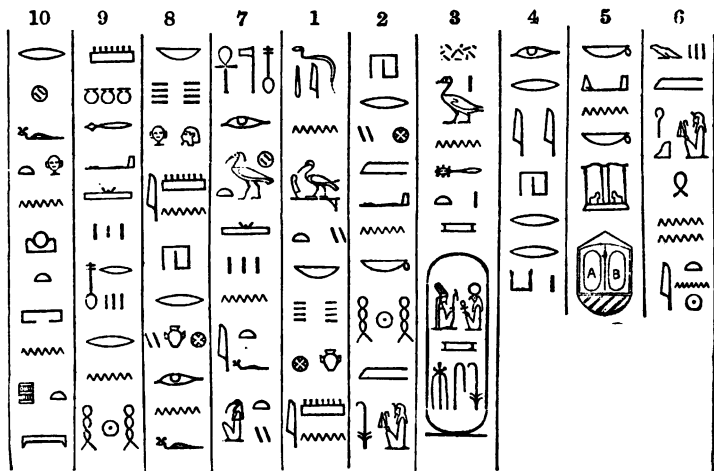
3. The Bari, or sacred boat, painted gold-colour, with the usual veil half-drawn across the naos, or shrine; the prow of the boat being richly carved, decorated with the Uta* or symbolic eye, and preceded by a large fan of ostrich feathers. The boat is peopled with small black figures, one of which kneels at the stern; while a sphinx couchant, with black body

* "This eye, called *uta*, was extensively used by the Egyptians both as the pendant or ornament of a necklace during life, and as a Sepulchral amulet. It represented the eye of a cow, especially that of the cow-form of the goddess Athor, supposed to be the mother of the sun," etc. etc.—*Guide to First and Second Egyptian Rooms*. S. BIRCH.

M. Grebaut, in his translation of a hymn to Ammon Ra, observes:—"Le soleil marchant d'Orient en Occident éclaire de ses deux yeux les deux régions du Nord et du Midi."—*Revue d'Arch.* vol. xxv. 1873; p. 387.

and human head, keeps watch at the prow. The sphinx symbolises the king.

On this wall, in a space between the sacred boat and the figure of Rameses, occurs a hieroglyphed inscription in ten vertical columns, sculptured in high relief and elaborately coloured. For a translation of



NOTE.—This inscription reads according to the numbering of the columns, beginning at 1 and reading to the right; then resuming at 7 and reading to the left. The spaces lettered A B in the lowest figure of column 5 are filled in with the two cartouches of Rameses II.



this inscription I am indebted to the courtesy of Dr. Birch.

INSCRIPTION ON SOUTH WALL,

translated by S. Birch, Esq., LL.D. F.S.A., etc. etc.

Says Thoth, Lord of Sesen* resident in the midst of Amenheri**—I give thee a long time to rule over the upper and lower country, Son of my Race, Beloved Rameses, Beloved of Amen, and to perform all thy wishes. I give thee to celebrate the millions festivals of thirty years*** of the king Ra-user-Ma, Approved of the Sun, Rameses Beloved of Amen, as ruler of the orbit of the Solar disk. The living, perfect God, giving glory to his father Thoth, Lord of Sesen, Resident in Amenheri, he made great and good monuments for ever in face of the Horizon of Heaven.

The meaning of which is that Thoth, addressing Rameses II., then living and reigning, promises him a long life and many anniversaries of his jubilee, in return for the works made in his (Thoth's) honour at Aboo Simbel and elsewhere.

NORTH WALL.

At the upper end of this wall is depicted a life-sized female figure wearing an elaborate blue head-

* *Sesen*—Ashmoon or Hermopolis.

** *Amenheri*—Aboo Simbel.

*** According to M. P. Pierret, these panegyries, or festivals of thirty years, were religious jubilees in celebration of each *thirtieth* anniversary of the accession of the reigning Pharaoh. There are however instances of panegyries bearing dates at variance with this reckoning; as for instance there is record of a panegyry of the XVIIIth year of Pepi, as well as of panegyries of the years XXXIV. and XXXVII. of Rameses II.

dress surmounted by a disk and two ostrich feathers. She holds in her right hand the crux ansata, and in her left the jackal-headed sceptre. This not being the sceptre of a goddess, and the head-dress resembling that of the Queen as represented on the façade of the Temple of Hathor, I conclude we have here a portrait of Nofre-ari, corresponding to the portrait of Rameses on the opposite wall. Near her stands a table of offerings, on which, among other objects, are placed four vases of a rich blue colour traversed by bands of yellow. They perhaps represent the kind of glass known as the false murrhine.* Each of these vases contains an object like a pine, the ground-colour of which is deep yellow, patterned over with scale-like subdivisions in vermillion. We took them to represent grains of maize pyramidally piled.

Lastly, a pendant to that on the opposite wall, comes the sacred Bari. It is, however, turned the reverse way, with its prow towards the east; and it rests upon an altar, in the centre of which are the cartouches of Rameses II. and a small hieroglyphed inscription, thus translated by S. Birch, Esq., LL.D., etc.

INSCRIPTION ON NORTH WALL,

"Beloved by Amen Ra, King of the Gods resident in the Land of Kenus." **

Beyond this point, at the end nearest the N.E. corner of the chamber, the piled sand conceals what-

* There are, in the British Museum, some bottles and vases of this description, dating from the eighteenth dynasty; see Case E, *Second Egyptian Room*. They are of dark blue translucent glass, veined with waving lines of opaque white and yellow.

** *Kenus*—Nubia.

ever else the wall may contain in the way of decoration.

EAST WALL.

If the east wall is decorated like the others (which may be taken for granted), its tableaux and inscriptions are hidden behind the sand which here rises to the ceiling. The doorway also occurs in this wall, occupying a space 4 feet 3½ inches in width on the inner side.

One of the most interesting incidents connected with the excavation of this little adytum remains yet to be told.

I have described the female figure at the upper end of the north wall, and how she holds in her right hand the crux ansata and in her left the jackal-headed sceptre. The hand that holds the crux hangs by her side; the hand that holds the sceptre is half raised. Close under this upraised hand, at a height of between three and four feet from the actual level of the floor, there were visible upon the uncoloured surface of the original stucco several lines of free-hand writing. This writing was laid on, apparently, with the brush, and the ink, if ever it had been black, had now become brown. Five long lines and three shorter lines were uninjured. Below these were traces of other fragmentary lines, almost obliterated by the sand.

We knew at once that this quaint faint writing must be in either the hieratic or demotic hand. We could distinguish, or thought we could distinguish, in it vague outlines of forms already familiar to us in the hieroglyphs—abstracts, as it were, of birds and snakes and boats.

There could be no doubt, at all events, that the thing was curious; and we set it down in our own minds as the writing of either the architect or decorator of the place.

Anxious to make, if possible, an exact facsimile of this inscription, the Writer copied it three times. Of the last and best of these copies I am so fortunate as to be able to give a translation from the learned pen of Dr. Birch.

HIERATIC INSCRIPTION

N. Wall of Speos.

Translated by S. Birch Esq., LL.D., &c. &c.

. . . . thy son having thou hast conquered the worlds at once Ammon Ra Harmachis* the God at the first time,** who gives life, health, and a time of many praises to the groom of the Khen,*** son of the Royal son of Cush,† Opener of the road, Maker of transport boats, Giver of instructions to his Lord Amenshaa

We all know how difficult it is to copy correctly in a language of which one is ignorant; and the tiniest curve or dot omitted, is, I am told, fatal to the sense of these ancient characters. In the present instance, notwithstanding the care with which the transcript was made, there must still have been errors; for it has been found undecipherable in places; and in these places there occur inevitable lacunæ.

* *i.e.* Ammon Ra, the Sun-God, in conjunction or identification with Har-em-axu, or Horus-on-the-Horizon, another Solar Deity,

** The primæval God.

*** Inner-place, or sanctuary.

† Ethiopia.

Enough, however, remains to show that the lines were written, not as we had supposed by the artist, but by a distinguished visitor, whose name unfortunately is illegible. This visitor was a son of the Prince of Cush, or as it is literally written, the Royal Son of Cush; that being the official title of the Governor of Ethiopia.* As there were certainly eight governors of Ethiopia during the reign of Rameses II. (and perhaps more, whose names have not reached us), it is impossible even to hazard a guess at the parentage of our visitor. We gather, however, that he was sent hither to construct a road; also that he built transport boats; and that he exercised priestly functions in that part of the Temple which was inaccessible to all but dignitaries of the sacerdotal order.

Site, inscriptions, and decorations taken into account, there yet remains this question to be answered:—

What was the nature and character of the monument just described?

It adjoined a pylon, and, as we have seen, it consisted of a vaulted pronaos in crude brick, and an adytum excavated in the rock. On the walls of this

* M. Chabas observes that Governors of Ethiopia bore this title, even though they did not themselves belong to the family of the Pharaoh (see *Antiquité Hist.* p. 141).

It is a curious fact that one of the Governors of Ethiopia during the reign of Rameses II. was called Mes, or Messou, signifying son, or child—which by some Egyptologists has been identified with *Moses*. Now the Moses of the Bible was adopted by Pharaoh's daughter, "became to her as a son," was instructed in the wisdom of the Egyptians, and married a Cushite woman, black but comely. It would perhaps be too much to speculate on the possibility of his having held the office of Governor, or Royal Son of Cush. M. Maspero, however, who has honoured me with his views on this subject, is of opinion that the Egyptians, having the sound of *sh* in their own language, would not have transcribed as *Messore* or *Mosa* a name which they had heard pronounced as *Moshu* by the Hebrews.

adytum are depicted various Gods with their attributes, votive offerings, and portraits of the King performing acts of adoration. The Bari, or ark, is also represented upon the north and south walls of the adytum. These are unquestionably the ordinary features of a temple.

On the other hand, there must be noted certain objections to these premises. It seemed to us that the pylon was built first, and that the S. boundary wall of the pronaos, being a subsequent erection, was supported against the slope of the pylon as far as where the spring of the vaulting began. Besides which, the pylon would have been a disproportionately large adjunct to a little monument the entire length of which, from the doorway of the pronaos to the west wall of the adytum, was less than 47 feet. We therefore concluded that the pylon belonged to the large temple, and was erected at the side, instead of in front of the façade, on account of the very narrow space between the mountain and the river.*

The pylon at Kom Ombo is, probably for the same reason, placed at the side of the Temple and on a lower level. To those who might object that a brick pylon would hardly be attached to a Temple of the first class, I would observe that the remains of a similar pylon are still to be seen at the top of what was once the landing-place leading to the Great Temple at Wady Halfeh. It may, therefore, be assumed that this little monument, although connected with the pylon by means of a doorway and staircase, was an excrescence of later date.

* At about an equal distance to the N. of the Great Temple, on the verge of the bank, is a shapeless block of brick ruin, which might possibly, if investigated, turn out to be the remains of a second pylon corresponding to this which we partially uncovered to the S.

Being an excrescence, however, was it, in the strict sense of the word, a Temple?

Even this seems to be doubtful. In the adytum there is no trace of any altar—no fragment of stone dais or sculptured image—no granite shrine, as at Philæ—no sacred recess, as at Denderah. The standard of Horus Aroëris occupies the centre place upon the wall facing the entrance, and occupies it, not as a tutelary divinity, but as a decorative device to separate the two large subjects already described. Again, the Gods represented in these subjects are Ra and Ammon Ra, the tutelary Gods of the Great Temple; but if we turn to the dedicatory inscription on page 124 we find that Thoth, whose image never occurs at all upon the walls* (unless as one of the little Gods in the cornice), is really the presiding deity of the place. It is he who welcomes Rameses and his offerings; who acknowledges the "glory" given to him by his beloved son; and who, in return for the great and good monuments erected in his honour, promises the king that he shall be given "a long time to rule over the upper and lower country."

Now Thoth was, *par excellence*, the God of Letters. He is styled the Lord of Divine Words; the Lord of the Sacred Writings; the Spouse of Truth. He personifies the Divine Intelligence. He is the patron of art and science; and he is credited with the invention of the alphabet. In one of the most interesting of Champollion's letters from Thebes,** he relates how, in the fragmentary ruins of the western extremity of the

* He may, however, be represented on the North wall, where it is covered by the sand-heap.

** Letter XIV. p. 235. *Nouvelle Ed. Paris, 1868.*

Ramesseum, he found a doorway adorned with the figures of Thoth and Saf; Thoth as the God of Literature, and Saf inscribed with the title of Lady President of the Hall of Books. At Denderah there is a chamber especially set apart for the sacred writings, and sculptured all over its walls with a catalogue raisonnée of the manuscript treasures of the Temple. At Edfoo a kind of closet built up between two of the pillars of the Hall of Assembly, was reserved for the same purpose. Every Temple, in short, had its library; and as the Egyptian books—being written on papyrus or leather, rolled up, and stored in coffers—occupied but little space, the rooms appropriated to this purpose were generally small.

It is Dr. Birch's opinion that our little monument may have been the library of the Great Temple of Aboo Simbel. This being the case, the absence of an altar, and the presence of Ra and Ammon Ra in the two principal tableaux, are sufficiently accounted for. The tutelary deity of the Great Temple and the patron deity of Rameses II. would naturally occupy, in this subsidiary structure, the same places that they occupy in the principal one; while the library, though in one sense the domain of Thoth, is still under the protection of the gods of the Temple to which it is an adjunct.

I do not believe we once asked ourselves how it came to pass that the place had remained hidden all these ages long; yet its very freshness proved how early it must have been abandoned. If it had been open in the time of the successors of Rameses II., they would probably, as elsewhere, have interpolated inscriptions and cartouches, or have substituted their

own cartouches for those of the founder. If it had been open in the time of the Ptolemies and Cæsars, travelling Greeks and learned Romans, and strangers from Byzantium and the cities of Asia Minor, would have cut their names on the door-jambs and scribbled *ex-votos* on the walls. If it had been open in the days of Nubian Christianity, the sculptures would have been coated with mud, and washed with lime, and daubed with pious caricatures of St. George and the Holy Family. But we found it intact—as perfectly preserved as a tomb that had lain hidden under the rocky bed of the desert. For these reasons I am inclined to think that it became inaccessible while Rameses yet lived. There can be little doubt that a wave of earthquake passed, during his reign, along the left bank of the Nile, beginning possibly above Wady Halfeh, and extending at least as far north as Gerf Hossayn. Such a shock might have wrecked the Temple at Wady Halfeh, as it dislocated the pylon of Wady Sabooah, and shook the built-out porticoes of Derr and Gerf Hossayn; which last four Temples, as they do not, I believe, show signs of having been added to by later Pharaohs, may be supposed to have been abandoned in consequence of the ruin that had befallen them. Here, at all events, it shook the mountain of the Great Temple, cracked one of the Osiriê columns of the First Hall,* shattered one of the four

* That this shock of earthquake occurred during the lifetime of Rameses II., seems to be proven by the fact that, where the Osiride column is cracked across, a wall has been built up to support the two last pillars to the left at the upper end of the great hall, on which wall is a large stela covered with an elaborate hieroglyphic inscription, dating from the xxxvth year, and the 13th day of the month of Tybi, *of the reign of Rameses II.* The right arm of the external colossus, to the right of the great doorway, has also been supported by the introduction of an arm to his throne, built up of square blocks; this being the only arm to any of the thrones. Miss Martineau detected a restoration of part

great Colossi, more or less injured the other three, flung down the great brick pylon, reduced the pronaos of the library to a heap of ruin, and not only brought down part of the ceiling of the excavated adytum, but rent open a vertical fissure in the rock, some 20 or 25 feet in length.

With so much irreparable damage done to the Great Temple, and with so much that was reparable calling for immediate attention, it is no wonder that these brick buildings were left to their fate. The priests would have rescued the sacred books from among the ruins, and then the place would have been abandoned.

So much by way of conjecture. As hypothesis, however, a sufficient reason is perhaps suggested for the wonderful state of preservation in which the little chamber had been handed down to the present time. A rational explanation is also offered for the absence of later cartouches, of Greek and Latin ex-votos, of Christian emblems, and of subsequent mutilation of every kind. For, save that one contemporary visitor—the son of the Royal Son of Cush—the place contained, when we opened it, no record of any passing traveller; no defacing autograph of tourist, archæologist, or scientific explorer. Neither Belzoni nor Champollion had found it out. Even the sharp eyes of the terrible Lepsius had passed it by.

It happens sometimes that hidden things, which in themselves are easy to find, escape detection because

of the lower jaw of the northernmost colossus, and also of a part of the dress of one of the Osiride statues in the great hall. I have in my possession a photograph taken at a time when the sand was several feet lower than at present, which shows that the right leg of the northernmost colossus is also a restoration on a gigantic scale, being built up, like the throne-arm, in great blocks.

no one thinks of looking for them. But such was not the case in this present instance. Search had been made here again and again; and even quite recently.

It seems that when the Khedive entertains distinguished guests and sends them in gorgeous Dahabeeyahs up the Nile, he grants them a virgin mound, or so many square feet of a famous necropolis; lets them dig as deep as they please; and allows them to keep whatever they may find. Sometimes he sends out scouts to beat the ground; and then a tomb is found and left unopened, and the illustrious visitor is allowed to discover it. When the scouts are unlucky, it may even sometimes happen that an old tomb is re-stocked; carefully closed up; and then, with all the charm of unpremeditation, re-opened a day or two after.

Now Sheykh Rashwan Ebn Hassan el Kashef told us that in 1869, when the Empress of the French was at Aboo Simbel, and again when the Prince and Princess of Wales came up the Nile after the Prince's illness, he received strict orders to find some hitherto undiscovered tomb,* in order that the Khedive's guests might have the satisfaction of opening it. But, he added, although he left no likely place untried among the rocks and valleys on both sides of the river, he could find nothing. To have unearthed such a Birbeh as this, would have done him good service with the Government, and have ensured him a splendid backsheesh from Prince or Empress. As it was, he

* There are tombs in some of the ravines behind the Temples, which, however, we did not see.

got reprimanded for want of diligence, and he even believed himself to be out of favour to this day.

I may here mention—in order to have done with this subject—that besides being buried outside to a depth of about eight feet, the adytum had been partially filled inside by a gradual infiltration of sand from above. This can only have accumulated at the time when the old sand-drift was at its highest. That drift, sweeping in one unbroken line across the front of the Great Temple, must at one time have risen here to a height of twenty feet above the present level. From thence the sand had found its way down the perpendicular fissure already mentioned. In the corner behind the door, the sand-pile rose to the ceiling, in shape just like the deposit at the bottom of an hour-glass. I am informed by the Painter that when the top of the doorway was found and an opening first effected, the sand poured out *from within*, like water escaping from an opened sluice.

Here, then, is positive proof (if proof were needed) that we were first to enter the place, at all events since the time when the great sand-drift rose as high as the top of the fissure.

The Painter wrote his name and ours, with the date (February 16th, 1874) on a space of blank wall over the inside of the doorway; and this was the only occasion upon which any of us left our names upon an Egyptian monument. On arriving at Korosko, where there is a post-office, he also dispatched a letter to the "Times," briefly recording the facts here related. That letter, which appeared on the 18th of March following, is reprinted in the Appendix at the end of this volume.

I am told that our names have been partially effaced, and that the wall-paintings which we had the happiness of admiring in all their beauty and freshness, are already much injured. Such is the fate of every Egyptian monument, great or small. The tourist carves it all over with names and dates, and in some instances with caricatures. The student of Egyptology, by taking wet paper "squeezes," sponges away every vestige of the original colour. The "collector" buys and carries off everything of value that he can get; and the Arab steals for him. The work of destruction, meanwhile, goes on apace. There is no one to prevent it; there is no one to discourage it. Every day, more inscriptions are mutilated — more tombs are rifled — more paintings and sculptures are defaced. The Louvre contains a full-length portrait of Seti I., cut out bodily from the walls of his sepulchre in the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings. The Museums of London, of Berlin, of Turin, of Florence, are rich in spoils which tell their own lamentable tale. When science leads the way, is it wonderful that ignorance should follow?

CHAPTER XIX.

Back through Nubia.

THERE are fourteen Temples between Aboo Simbel and Philæ; to say nothing of grottoes, tombs, and other ruins. As a rule, people begin to get tired of Temples about this time, and vote them too plentiful. Meek travellers go through them as a duty; but the greater number rebel. Our Happy Couple, I grieve to say, went over to the majority. Dead to shame, they openly proclaimed themselves bored. They even skipped several Temples.

For myself, I was never bored by them. Though they had been twice as many, I should not have wished them fewer. Miss Martineau tells how, in this part of the river, she was scarcely satisfied to sit down to breakfast without having first explored a Temple; but I could have breakfasted, dined, supped on Temples. My appetite for them was insatiable, and grew with what it fed upon. I went over them all. I took notes of them all. I sketched them every one.

I may as well say at once that I shall reproduce but few of those notes. If, surrounded by their local associations, these ruins fail to interest many who travel far to see them, it is not to be supposed that they would interest readers at home. Here and there, perhaps, might be one who would care to pore with me over every broken sculpture; to spell out every half-legible cartouche; to trace through Greek and Roman

influences (which are nowhere more conspicuous than in these Nubian buildings) the slow deterioration of the Egyptian style. But the world for the most part reserves itself, and rightly, for the great epochs and the great names of the past; and because it has not yet had too much of Karnak, of Aboo Simbel, of the Pyramids, it sets slight store by those minor monuments which record the periods of foreign rule, and the decline of native art.

For these reasons, therefore, I propose to dismiss very briefly many places upon which I bestowed hours of delightful labour.

We left Aboo Simbel just as the moon was rising on the evening of the 18th of February, and dropped down with the current for three or four miles before mooring for the night. At six next morning the men began rowing; and at half-past eight, the heads of the Colossi were still looking placidly after us across a ridge of intervening hills. They were then more than five miles distant in a direct line; but every feature was still distinct in the early daylight. I went up again and again, as long as they remained in sight, and bade good-bye to them at last with that same heartache which comes of a farewell view of the Alps.

When I say that we were seventeen days getting from Aboo Simbel to Philæ, and that we had the wind against us from sunrise till sunset almost every day, it will be seen that our progress was of the slowest. To those who were tired of Temples, and to the crew who were running short of bread, these long days of lying up under the bank, or of rocking to and fro in the middle of the river, were dreary enough.

Slowly but surely, however, the hard-won miles go

by. Sometimes the barren desert hems us in to right and left, with never a blade of green between the rock and the river. Sometimes, as at Tosko*, we come upon an open tract, where there are palms, and castor-berry plantations, and corn-fields alive with quail. The Idle Man goes ashore at Tosko with his gun, while the Little Lady and the Writer climb a solitary rock about 200 feet above the river. The bank shelves here, and a crescent-like wave of inundation, about three miles in length, overflows it every season. From this height one sees exactly how far the wave goes, and how it must make a little bay when it is there. Now it is a bay of barley, full to the brim, and rippling with the breeze. Beyond the green comes the desert; the one defined against the other as sharply as water against land. The desert looks wonderfully old beside the young green of the corn, and the Nile flows wide among sandbanks, like a tidal river near the sea. The village, squared off in parallelograms, like a cattle-market, lies mapped out below. A field-glass shows that the houses are simply cloistered courtyards roofed with palm-thatch; the sheykh's house being larger than the rest, with the usual open space and spreading sycamore in front. There are women moving to and fro in the courtyards, and husbandmen in the castor-berry patches. A funeral with a train of wailers goes out presently towards the burial-ground on the edge of the desert. The Idle Man, a slight figure with a veil twisted round his hat, wades, half-hidden, through the barley, signalling his whereabouts every now and then by a puff of white smoke. A cargo-boat, stripped and shorn, comes floating down the

* Tosko is on the eastern bank, and not, as in Keith Johnston's map, on the west.

river, making no visible progress. A native felucca, carrying one tattered brown sail, goes swiftly up with the wind at a pace that will bring her to Abou Simbel before nightfall. Already she is past the village; and those black specks yonder, which we had never dreamed were crocodiles, have slipped off into the water at her approach. And now she is far in the distance—that glowing, illimitable distance, traversed by long silvery reaches of river, and ending in a vast flat, so blue and aerial that, but for some three or four notches of purple peaks on the horizon, one could scarcely discern the point at which land and sky melt into each other.

Ibrim comes next; then Derr; then Wady Sabooah. At Ibrim, as at Derr, there are “fair” families, whose hideous light hair and blue eyes (grafted on brown-black skins) date back to Bosnian forefathers of 360 years ago. These people give themselves airs, and are the *haute noblesse* of the place. The men are lazy and quarrelsome. The women trail longer robes, wear more beads and rings, and are altogether more unattractive and castor-oily than any we have seen elsewhere. They keep slaves, too. We saw these unfortunates trotting at the heels of their mistresses, like dogs. Knowing slavery to be officially illegal in the dominions of the Khedive, the M. B.s applied to a dealer, who offered them an Abyssinian girl for ten pounds. This useful article—warranted a bargain—was to sweep, wash, milk, and churn; but was not equal to cooking. The M.B.s, it is needless to add, having verified the facts, retired from the transaction.

At Derr we pay a farewell visit to the Temple; and

at Amada, arriving towards close of day, see the great view for the last time in the glory of sunset.

And now, though the north wind blows persistently, it gets hotter every day. The crocodiles like it, and come out to bask in the sunshine. Called up one morning in the middle of breakfast, we see two—a little one and a big one—on a sandbank near by. The men rest upon their oars. The boat goes with the stream. No one speaks; no one moves. Breathlessly and in dead silence, we drift on till we are close beside them. The big one is rough and black, like the trunk of a London elm, and measures full eighteen feet in length. The little one is pale and greenish, and glistens like glass. All at once, the old one starts, doubles itself up for a spring, and disappears with a tremendous splash. But the little one, apparently unconscious of danger, lifts its tortoise-like head, and eyes us sidewise. Presently some one whispers; and that whisper breaks the spell. Our little crocodile flings up its tail, plunges down the bank, and is gone in a moment.

The crew could not understand how the Idle Man, after lying in wait for crocodiles at Aboo Simbel, should let this rare chance pass without a shot. But we had heard since then of so much indiscriminate slaughter at the Second Cataract, that he was resolved to bear no part in the extermination of those old historic reptiles. That a sportsman should wish for a single trophy is not unreasonable; but that scores of crack shots should go up every winter, killing and wounding these wretched brutes at an average rate of from twelve to eighteen per gun, is mere butchery, and cannot be too strongly reprehended. Year by year, the creatures become shyer and fewer; and the day is probably not far distant when

a crocodile will be as rarely seen below Semneh as it is now rarely seen below Assouan.

The thermometer stands at 85° in the saloon of the Philæ, when we come one afternoon to Wady Sabooah, where there is a solitary Temple drowned in sand. It was approached once by an avenue of sphinxes and standing colossi, now shattered and buried. The roof of the pronaos, if ever it was roofed, is gone. The inner halls and the sanctuary—all excavated in the rock—are choked and impassable. Only the propylon stands clear of sand; and that, massive as it is, looks as if one touch of a battering-ram would bring it to the ground. Every huge stone in it is loose. Every block in the cornice seems tottering in its place. In all this, we fancy we recognise the work of our Aboo Simbel earthquake.*

At Wady Sabooah we see a fat native. The fact claims record, because it is so uncommon. A stalwart middle-aged man, dressed in a tattered kilt and carrying a palm-staff in his hand, he stands before us the living double of the famous wooden statue at Boulak. He is followed by his two wives and three or four children, all bent upon trade. The women have trinkets, the boys a live chameleon and a small stuffed crocodile for sale. While the Painter is bargaining for the crocodile and L. for a nose-ring, the Writer makes

* This is one of the Temples erected by Rameses the Great, and, I believe, not added to by any of his successors. The colossi, the Osiride columns, the sphinxes (now battered out of all human semblance) were originally made in his image. The cartouches are all his, and in one of the inner chambers there is a list of his little family. All these chambers were accessible till three or four years ago, when a party of German travellers carried off some sculptured tablets of great archæological interest; since when the entrance has been sanded up by order of Mariette Bey. See also, with regard to the probable date of the earthquake at this place, chap. xviii. p. 132 of this volume.

acquaintance with a pair of self-important hoopoes, who live in the pylon and evidently regard it as a big nest of their own building. They sit observing me curiously while I sketch, nodding their crested polls and chattering disparagingly, like a couple of critics. By and by comes a small black bird with a white breast, and sings deliciously. It is like no little bird that I have ever seen before; but the song that it pours so lavishly from its tiny throat is as sweet and brilliant as a canary's.

Powerless against the wind, the Dahabeeyah lies idle day after day in the sun. Sometimes, when we chance to be near a village, the natives squat on the bank, and stare at us for hours together. The moment any one appears on deck, they burst into a chorus of "Backsheesh!" There is but one way to get rid of them, and that is to sketch them. The effect is instantaneous. With a good sized block and a pencil, a whole village may be put to flight at a moment's notice. If on the other hand one wishes for a model, the difficulty is insuperable. The Painter tried in vain to get some of the women and girls (not a few of whom were really pretty) to sit for their portraits. I well remember one haughty beauty, shaped and draped like a Juno, who stood on the bank one morning, scornfully watching all that was done on deck. She carried a flat basket back-handed; and her arms were covered with bracelets, and her fingers with rings. Her little girl, in a Madame Nubia fringe, clung to her skirts, half wondering, half frightened. The Painter sent out an ambassador plenipotentiary to offer her anything from sixpence to half-a-sovereign, if she would only stand like that for half-an-hour. The manner of her refusal

was grand. She drew her shawl over her face, took her child's hand, and stalked away like an offended goddess. The Writer, meanwhile, hidden behind a curtain, had snatched a tiny sketch from the cabin-window.

On the western bank, somewhere between Wady Sabooah and Maharrakeh, in a spot quite bare of vegetation, stand the ruins of a fortified town which is neither mentioned by Murray nor entered in the maps. It is built high on a base of reddish rock, and commands the river and the desert. The Painter and Writer explored it one afternoon, in the course of a long ramble. Climbing first a steep slope strewn with masonry, we came to the remains of a stone gateway. Finding this impassable, we made our way through a breach in the battlemented wall, and thence up a narrow road down which had been poured a cataract of *débris*. Skirting a ruined postern at the top of this road, we found ourselves in a close labyrinth of vaulted arcades built of crude brick and lit at short intervals by openings in the roof. These strange streets—for they were streets—were lined on either side by small dwellings built of crude brick on stone foundations. We went into some of the houses—mere ruined courts and roofless chambers, in which were no indications of hearths or staircases. In one lay a fragment of stone column about 14 inches in diameter. The air in these ancient streets was foul and stagnant, and the ground was everywhere heaped with fragments of black, red, and yellowish pottery, like the shards of Elephantine and Philæ. A more desolate place in a more desolate situation I never saw. It looked as if it had been besieged, sacked, and abandoned, a thousand years ago;

which is probably under the mark, for the character of the pottery would seem to point to the period of Roman occupation. Noting how the brick superstructures were reared on apparently earlier masonry, we concluded that the beginnings of this place were probably Egyptian, and the later work Roman or Coptic. The marvel was that any town should have been built in so barren a spot, there being not so much as an inch-wide border of lentils for a mile or more between the river and the desert.

Having traversed the place from end to end, we came out through another breach on the westward side, and, thinking to find a sketchable point of view inland, struck down towards the plain. In order to reach this, one first must skirt a deep ravine which divides the rock of the citadel from the desert. Following the brink of this ravine to the point at which it falls into the level, we found to our great surprise that we were treading the banks of an extinct river.

It was full of sand now; but beyond all question it had once been full of water. It came, evidently, from the mountains over towards the north-west. We could trace its windings for a long way across the plain, thence through the ravine, and on southwards in a line parallel with the Nile. Here, beneath our feet, were the water-worn rocks through which it had fretted its way; and yonder, half-buried in sand, were the boulders it had rounded and polished, and borne along in its course. I doubt, however, if when it was a river of water, this stream was half as beautiful as now, when it is a river of sand. It was turbid then, no doubt, and charged with sediment. Now it is more

golden than Pactolus, and covered with ripples more playful and undulating than were ever modelled by Canaletti's pencil.

Supposing yonder town to have been founded in the days when the river was a river, and the plain fertile and well watered, the mystery of its position is explained. It was protected in front by the Nile, and in the rear by the ravine and the river. But how long ago was this? Here apparently was an independent stream, taking its rise among the Libyan mountains. It dated back, consequently, to a time when those barren hills collected and distributed water—that is to say, to a time when it used to rain in Nubia. And that time must have been before the rocky barrier broke down at Silsilis, in the old days when the land of Cush flowed with milk and honey.*

It would rain even now in Nubia, if it could. That same evening when the sun was setting, we saw a fan-like drift of dappled cloud miles high above our heads, melting, as it seemed, in fringes of iridescent vapour. We could distinctly see those fringes forming, wavering, and evaporating; unable to descend as rain because dispersed at a high altitude by radiated heat from the desert. This, with one exception, was the only occasion on which I saw clouds in Nubia.

Coming back, we met a solitary native, with a string of beads in his hand and a knife up his sleeve. He followed us for a long way, volunteering a but half-intelligible story about some unknown Birbeh** in the

* Not only near this nameless town, but in many other parts between Abou Simbel and Philæ, we found the old alluvial soil lying as high as from 20 to 30 feet above the level of the present inundations.

** *Ar. Birbeh*, Temple.

desert. We asked where it was, and he pointed up the course of our unknown river.

"You have seen it?" said the Painter.

"Marrat keteer" (many times).

"How far is it?"

"One day's march in the hagger" (desert).

"And have no Ingleezeh ever been to look for it?"

He shook his head at first, not understanding the question; then looked grave, and held up one finger.

Our stock of Arabic was so small, and his so interlarded with Kensee, that we had great difficulty in making out what he said next. We gathered, however, that some Howadji, travelling alone and on foot, had gone in search of this Birbeh, and never came back. Was he lost? Was he killed?—Who could say?

"It was a long time ago," said the man with the beads. "It was a long time ago, and he took no guide with him."

We would have given much to trace the river to its source, and search for this unknown Temple in the desert. But it is one of the misfortunes of this kind of travelling that one cannot easily turn aside from the beaten track. The hot season is approaching; the river is running low; the daily cost of the Dahabeeyah is exorbitant; and in Nubia, where little or nothing can be bought in the way of food, the dilatory traveller risks starvation. It was something, however, to have seen with one's own eyes that the Nile, instead of flowing for a distance of 1200 miles unfed by any

affluent, had here received the waters of a tributary.*

To those who have a South breeze behind them, the Temples must now follow in quick succession. We, however, achieved them by degrees, and rejoiced when our helpless Dahabeeyah lay within rowing reach of anything worth seeing. Thus we pull down one day to Maharrakeh—in itself a dull ruin; but picturesquely desolate. Seen as one comes up the bank on landing, two parallel rows of columns stand boldly up against the sky, supporting a ruined entablature. In the foreground, a few stunted Dôm-palms starve in an arid soil. The barren desert closes in the distance.

We are beset here by an insolent crowd of savage-looking men and boys, and impudent girls with long frizzy hair and Nubian fringes, who pester us with beads and pebbles; dance, shout, slap their legs and clap their hands in our faces; and pelt us when we go away. One ragged warrior brandishes an antique brass-mounted firelock full six feet long in the barrel, and some of the others carry slender spears.

The Temple—a late Roman structure—would seem to have been wrecked by earthquake before it was completed. The masonry is all in the rough—pillars as they came from the quarry; capitals blocked out, waiting for the carver. These unfinished ruins—of which every stone looks new, as if the work was still in progress—affect one's imagination strangely. On a

* "The Nile receives its last tributary, the Atbara, in Lat. 17° 42' N., at the northern extremity of the peninsular tract anciently called the island of Merôë, and thence flows N. (a single stream without the least accession) through 12 degrees of latitude; or, following its winding course, at least 1200 miles, to the sea."—*Blackie's Imperial Gazetteer*, 1861. A careful survey of the country would probably bring to light the dry beds of many more such tributaries as the one described above.

fallen wall South of the portico, the Idle Man detected some remains of a Greek inscription;* but for hieroglyphic characters, or cartouches by which to date the building, we looked in vain.**

Dakkeh comes next in order; then Gerf Hossayn, Dendoor, and Kalabsheh. Arriving at Dakkeh soon after sunrise, we find the whole population—screaming, pushing, chattering, laden with eggs, pigeons, and gourds for sale—drawn up to receive us. There is a large sand island in the way here; so we moor about a mile above the Temple.

We first saw the twin pylons of Dakkeh some weeks ago from the deck of the *Philæ*, and we then likened them to the majestic towers of Edfoo. Approaching them now by land, we are surprised to find them so small. It is a brilliant, hot morning; and our way lies by the river, between the lentil slope and the castor-berry patches. There are flocks of pigeons flying low overhead; barking dogs and crowing cocks in the village close by; and all over the path, hundreds of

* Of this wall, Burckhardt notices that "it has fallen down, apparently from some sudden and violent concussion, as the stones are lying on the ground in layers, as when placed in the wall; a proof that they must have fallen all at once."—*Travels in Nubia*: Ed. 1819, p. 100. But he has not observed the inscription, which is in large characters, and consists of three lines on three separate layers of stones. The Idle Man copied the original upon the spot, which copy has since been identified with an ex-voto of a Roman soldier published in Boeckh's *Corpus Inscr. Græc.*, of which the following is a translation:—

"The vow of Verecundus the soldier, and his most pious parents and Gaius his little brother, and the rest of his brethren."

** A clue, however, might possibly be found to the date. There is a rudely sculptured tableau—the only piece of sculpture in the place—on a detached wall near the standing columns. It represents Isis worshipped by a youth in a short toga. Both figures are lumpish and ill-modelled; and Isis, seated under a conventional fig-tree, wears her hair erected in stiff rolls over the forehead, like a diadem. It is the face and stiffly-dressed hair of Marciana, the sister of Trajan, as shown upon the well-known coin engraved in Smith's *Dic. of Greek and Roman Biography*, vol. II. p. 939. Maharrakeh is the Hieria Sycaminos, or Place of the Sacred Fig-tree, where ends the Itinerary of Antoninus.

beetles—real, live scarabs, black as coal and busy as ants—rolling their clay pellets up from the water's edge to the desert. If we were to examine a score or so of these pellets, we should here and there find one that contained no eggs; for it is a curious fact that the scarab-beetle makes and rolls her pellet, whether she has an egg to deposit or not. The female beetle, though assisted by the male, is said to do the heavier share of the pellet-rolling; and if evening comes on before her pellet is safely stowed away, she will sleep holding it with her feet all night, and resume her labour in the morning.*

The Temple here—begun by an Ethiopian king named Arkaman (Ergamenes), about whom Diodorus Siculus has a long story to tell, and carried on by the Ptolemies and Cæsars—stands in a desolate open space to the north of the village, and is approached by an avenue, the walls of which are constructed with blocks from some earlier building. The whole of this avenue and all the waste ground for three or four hundred yards round about the Temple, is not merely strewn but piled with fragments of pottery, pebbles, and large smooth stones of porphyry, alabaster, basalt, and a kind of marble like verde antico. These stones are puzzling. They look as if they might be fragments of statues that had been rolled and polished by ages of friction in the bed of a torrent. Among the potsherds we find some inscribed fragments, like those of Elephantine.**

* See "*The Scarabæus Sacer*" by C. Woodrooffe, B.A.—a paper (based on notes by the late Rev. C. Johns) read before the Winchester and Hampshire Scientific and Literary Society, Nov. 8, 1875. *Privately printed*.

** See Chap. X. p. 233, vol. i. Dakkeh (the Pselcis of the Greeks and Romans. the Pselk of the Egyptians) was at one time regarded as the confine of Egypt and Ethiopia, and would seem to have been a great military station. The in-

Of the Temple I will only say that, as masonry, it is better put together than any work of the XVIIIth or XIXth dynasties with which I am acquainted. The sculptures, however, are atrocious. Such mis-shapen hieroglyphs; such dumpy, smirking goddesses; such clownish kings in such preposterous head-dresses, we have never seen till now. The whole thing, in short, as regards sculptresque style, is the Ptolemaic out-Ptolemied.

Rowing round presently to Kobban—the river running wide, with the sand island between—we land under the walls of a huge crude-brick structure, black with age, which at first sight looks quite shapeless; but which proves to be an ancient Egyptian fortress, buttressed, towered, loopholed, finished at the angles with the invariable moulded torus, and surrounded by a deep dry moat, which is probably yet filled each summer by the inundation.

Now of all rare things in the valley of the Nile, a purely secular ruin is the rarest; and this, with the exception of some foundations of dwellings here and there, is the first we have seen. It is very, very old; as old certainly as the days of Thothmes III., whose name is found on some scattered blocks about a quarter of a mile away, and who built two similar fortresses at Semneh, thirty-five miles above Wady Halfeh. It may even be a thousand years older still, and date from the time of Amenemhat III., whose name is also found

scribed potsherds here are chiefly receipts and accounts of soldiers' pay. The walls of the Temple outside, and of the chambers within, abound also in free-hand graffiti, most of which are written in red ink. We observed some that appeared to be trilingual. The Writer copied one which is supposed by Dr. Birch to be in Ethiopian Demotic, and is apparently a name; and another in rude characters which appear to be quite unknown.

on a stela near Kobban.* For here was once an ancient city, when Pselcis (now Dakkeh) was but a new suburb on the opposite bank. The name of this ancient city is lost, but it is by some supposed to be identical with the Metacompso of Ptolemy.** As the suburb grew, the mother town declined, and in time, the suburb became the city, and the city became the suburb. The scattered blocks aforesaid, together with

* "Less than a quarter of a mile to the south are the ruins of a small sand-stone Temple with clustered columns; and on the way, near the village, you pass a stone stela of Amenemha III., mentioning his eleventh year."—*Murray's Handbook for Egypt*, p. 481. M. Maspero, writing of Usertasen III., says, "Son fils et successeur, Amenemhat III., fit construire en face de Pselcis une forteresse importante."—*Hist. Ancienne des Peuples de l'Orient*. Chap. III. p. 113.

At Kobban also was found the famous stela of Rameses II., called the Stela of Dakkeh; see chap. XIV. pp. 32-35 of this volume. In this inscription, a cast from which is at the Louvre, Rameses II. is stated to have caused an artesian well to be made in the desert between this place and Gebel Oellaky, in order to facilitate the working of the gold mines of those parts.

** "According to Ptolemy, Metachompso should be opposite Pselcis, where there are extensive brick ruins. If so, Metachompso and Contra Pselcis must be the same town."—*Topography of Thebes*, etc.; Sir G. Wilkinson. Ed. 1835, p. 488. M. Vivien de St. Martin is, however, of opinion that the island of Derar, near Maharrakeh, is the true Metachompso. See *Le Nord de l'Afrique*, section VI. p. 161. Be this as it may, we at all events know of one great siege that this fortress sustained, and of one great battle fought beneath its walls. "The Ethiopians," says Strabo, "having taken advantage of the withdrawal of part of the Roman forces, surprised and took Syene, Elephantine, and Philæ, enslaved the inhabitants, and threw down the statues of Cæsar. But Petronius, marching with less than 10,000 infantry and 800 horse against an army of 30,000 men, compelled them to retreat to Pselcis. He then sent deputies to demand restitution of what they had taken, and the reasons which had induced them to begin the war. On their alleging that they had been ill treated by the nomarchs, he answered that these were not the sovereigns of the country—but Cæsar. When they desired three days for consideration and did nothing which they were bound to do, Petronius attacked and compelled them to fight. They soon fled, being badly commanded and badly armed, for they carried large shields made of raw hides, and hatchets for offensive weapons. Part of the insurgents were driven into the city, others fled into the uninhabited country, and such as ventured upon the passage of the river escaped to a neighbouring island, where there were not many crocodiles, on account of the current. . . . Petronius then attacked Pselcis, and took it."—STRABO'S *Geography*, Bohn's translation, 1857, vol. III., pp. 267-8. This island to which the insurgents fled may have been the large sand island which here still occupies the middle of the river, and obstructs the approach to Dakkeh. Or they may have fled to the island of Derar, seven miles higher up. Strabo does not give the name of the island.

the remains of a small Temple, yet mark the position of the elder city.

The walls of this most curious and interesting fortress have probably lost much of their original height. They are in some parts 30 feet thick, and nowhere less than 20. Vertical on the inside, they are built at a buttress-slope outside, with additional shallow buttresses at regular distances. These last, as they can scarcely add to the enormous strength of the original wall, were probably designed for effect. There are two entrances to the fortress; one in the centre of the north wall, and one in the south. We enter the enclosure by the last-named, and find ourselves in the midst of an immense parallelogram measuring about 450 feet from east to west, and perhaps 300 feet from north to south.

All within these bounds is a wilderness of ruin. The space looks large enough for a city, and contains what might be the *debris* of a dozen cities. We climb huge mounds of rubbish; skirt cataracts of broken pottery; and stand on the brink of excavated pits, honeycombed forty feet below with brick foundations. Over these mounds and at the bottom of these pits, swarm men, women, and children, filling and carrying away basket-loads of rubble. The dust rises in clouds. The noise, the heat, the confusion, are indescribable. One pauses, bewildered, seeking in vain to discover in this mighty maze any indication of a plan. It is only by an effort that one gradually realises how the place is but a vast shell, and how all these mounds and pits mark the site of what was once a huge edifice rising tower above tower to a central keep, such as we see represented in the battle-subjects of Aboo Simbel and Thebes.

That towered edifice and central keep—quarried, broken up, carried away piecemeal, reduced to powder, and spread over the land as manure—has now disappeared almost to its foundations. Only the well in the middle of the enclosure, and the great wall of circuit, remain. That wall is doomed, and will by and by share the fate of the rest. The well, which must have been very deep, is choked with rubbish to the brim. Meanwhile, in order to realise what the place in its present condition is like, one need but imagine how the Tower of London would look if the whole of the inner buildings—White Tower, Chapel, Armoury, Governor's Quarters and all—were levelled in shapeless ruin, and only the outer walls and moat were left.

Built up against the inner side of the wall of circuit are the remains of a series of massive towers, the tops of which, as they are even now, strangely enough, shorter than the external structure, can never have communicated with the battlements, unless by ladders. The finest of these towers, together with a magnificent fragment of wall, faces the eastern desert.

Going out by the N. entrance, we find the sides of the gateway, and even the steps leading down into the moat, in perfect preservation; while at the base of the great wall, on the outer side facing the river, there yet remains a channel or conduit about two feet square, built and roofed with stone, which in Murray is described as a water-gate.

The sun is high, the heat is overwhelming, the felucca waits; and we turn reluctantly away, knowing that between here and Cairo we shall see no more curious relic of the far-off past than this dismantled stronghold. It is a mere mountain of unburnt brick;

altogether unlovely; admirable only for the gigantic strength of its proportions; pathetic only in the abjectness of its ruin. Yet it brings the lost ages home to one's imagination in a way that no Temple could ever bring them. It dispels for a moment the historic glamour of the sculptures, and compels us to remember those nameless and forgotten millions, of whom their rulers fashioned soldiers in time of war, and builders in time of peace.

Our adventures by the way are few and far between; and we now rarely meet a Dahabeeyah. Birds are more plentiful than when we were in this part of the river a few weeks ago. We see immense flights of black and white cranes congregated at night on the sandbanks; and any number of quail may be had for the shooting. It is matter for rejoicing when the Idle Man goes out with his gun and brings home a full bag; for our last sheep was killed before we started for Wady Halfeh, and our last poultry ceased cackling at Abou Simbel.

One morning early, we see a bride taken across the river in a big boat full of women and girls, who are clapping their hands and shrilling the tremulous zaghareet. The bride—a chocolate beauty with magnificent eyes—wears a gold brow-pendant and nose-ring, and has her hair newly plaited in hundreds of tails, finished off at the ends with mud pellets daubed with yellow ochre. She stands surrounded by her companions, proud of her finery, and pleased to be stared at by the Ingleezeh.

About this time, also, we see one night a wild sort of festival going on for some miles along both sides of the river. Watch-fires break out towards twilight,

first on this bank, then on that; becoming brighter and more numerous as the darkness deepens. By and by, when we are going to bed, we hear sounds of drumming on the Eastern bank, and see from afar a torchlight procession and dance. The effect of this dance of torches—for it is only the torches that are visible—is quite diabolic. The lights flit and leap as if they were alive; circling, clustering, dispersing, bobbing, poussetting, pursuing each other at a gallop, and whirling every now and then through the air, like rockets. Late as it is, we would fain put ashore and see this orgy more nearly; but Reïs Hassan shakes his head. The natives hereabout are said to be quarelsome; and if, as it is probable, they are celebrating the festival of some local saint, we might be treated as intruders.

Coming at early morning to Gerf Hossayn, we make our way up to the Temple, which is excavated in the face of a limestone cliff, a couple of hundred feet, perhaps, above the river. A steep path, glaring hot in the sun, leads to a terrace in the rock; the Temple being approached through the ruins of a built-out portico and an avenue of battered colossi. It is a gloomy place within—an inferior edition, so to say, of the Great Temple of Abou Simbel; and of the same date. It consists of a first hall supported by Osiride pillars, a second and smaller hall with square columns; a smoke-blackened sanctuary; and two side-chambers. The Osiride colossi, which stand 20 feet high without the entablature over their heads or the pedestal under their feet, are thick-set, bow-legged, and mis-shapen. Their faces would seem to have been painted black originally; while those of the avenue outside have distinctly Ethiopian features. One seems to detect here,

as at Derr and Wady Sabooah, the work of provincial sculptors; just as at Aboo Simbel one recognises the master-style of the artists of the Theban Ramesseum.

The side-chambers at Gerf Hossayn are infested with bats. These bats are the great sight of the place, and have their appointed showman. We find him waiting for us with an end of tarred rope, which he flings, blazing, into the pitch-dark doorway. For a moment we see the whole ceiling hung, as it were, with a close fringe of white, filmy-looking pendants. But it is only for a moment. The next instant the creatures are all in motion, dashing out madly in our faces like driven snow-flakes. We picked up a dead one afterwards, when the rush was over, and examined it by the outer daylight—a lovely little creature, white and downy, with fine transparent wings, and little pink feet, and the prettiest mousey mouth imaginable.

Bordered with dwarf palms, acacias, and henna-bushes, the cliffs between Gerf Hossayn and Dendoor stand out in detached masses so like ruins that sometimes we can hardly believe they are rocks. At Dendoor, when the sun is setting and a delicious gloom is stealing up the valley, we visit a tiny Temple on the western bank. It stands out above the river surrounded by a wall of enclosure, and consists of a single pylon, a portico, two little chambers, and a sanctuary. The whole thing is like an exquisite toy, so covered with sculptures, so smooth, so new-looking, so admirably built. Seeing them half by sunset, half by dusk, it matters not that these delicately-wrought bas-reliefs are of the Decadence school.* The rosy half-light of

* "C'est un ouvrage non achevé du temps de l'empereur Auguste. Quoi que peu important par son étendue, ce monument m'a beaucoup intéressé,

an Egyptian after-glow covers a multitude of sins, and steeps the whole in an atmosphere of romance.

Wondering what has happened to the climate, we wake shivering next morning an hour or so before break of day, and, for the first time in several weeks, taste the old early chill upon the air. When the sun rises, we find ourselves at Kalabsheh, having passed the limit of the Tropic during the night. Henceforth, no matter how great the heat may be by day, this chill invariably comes with the dark hour before dawn.

The usual yelling crowd, with the usual beads, baskets, eggs, and pigeons, for sale, greets us on the shore at Kalabsheh. One of the men has a fine old two-handed sword in a shabby blue velvet sheath, for which he asks five Napoleons. It looks as if it might have belonged to a crusader. Some of the women bring buffalo-cream in filthy-looking black skins slung round their waists like girdles. The cream is excellent; but the skins temper one's enjoyment of the unaccustomed dainty.

There is a magnificent Temple here, and close by, excavated in the cliff, a rock-cut Speos, the local name of which is Bayt-el-Welly. The sculptures of this famous Speos have been more frequently described and engraved than almost any sculptures in Egypt. The procession of Ethiopian tribute-bearers, the assault of the Amorite city, the Triumph of Rameses, are familiar not only to every reader of Wilkinson, but to every visitor passing through the Egyptian Rooms of the British Museum*. Notwithstanding the casts that

puisqu'il est entièrement relatif à l'incarnation d'Osiris sous forme humaine, sur la terre."—*Lettres écrites d'Égypte*, etc.: CHAMPOLLION. Paris, 1868, p. 126.

* See Chapter XV. p. 46 of this volume.

have been taken from them, and the ill-treatment to which they have been subjected by natives and visitors, they are still beautiful. The colour of those in the roofless courtyard, though so perfect when Mr. Bonomi executed his admirable facsimiles, has now almost entirely peeled off; but in the portico and inner chambers it is yet brilliant. An emerald green Osiris, a crimson Anubis, and an Isis of the brightest chrome yellow, are astonishingly pure and forcible in quality. As for the flesh-tones of the Anubis, this was I believe the only instance I observed of a true crimson in Egyptian pigments.

Between the Speos of Bayt-el-Welly and the neighbouring Temple of Kalabsheh there lies about half-a-mile of hilly pathway and a gulf of 1400 years. Rameses ushers us into the presence of Augustus, and we pass, as it were, from an oratory in the Great House of Pharaoh to the presence-chamber of the Cæsars.

But if the decorative work in the presence-chamber of the Cæsars was anything like the decorative work in the Temple of Kalabsheh, then the taste thereof was of the vilest. Such a masquerade of deities; such striped and spotted and cross-barred robes; such outrageous head-dresses; such crude and violent colouring,* we have never seen the like of. As for the goddesses, they are gaudier than the dancing damsels of Luxor; while the kings balance on their heads diadems compounded of horns, moons, birds, balls, beetles, lotus-blossoms, asps, vases, and feathers. The Temple however, is conceived on a grand scale. It is the Karnak of Nubia. But it is a Karnak that has evidently been

* I observed mauve here, for the first and only time; and very brilliant ultramarine. There are also traces of gilding on many of the figures.

visited by a shock of earthquake far more severe than that which shook the mighty pillars of the Hypostyle Hall and flung down the obelisk of Hatasu. From the river, it looks like a huge fortress; but seen from the threshold of the main gateway, it is a wilderness of ruin. Fallen blocks, pillars, capitals, entablatures, lie so extravagantly piled, that there is not one spot in all those halls and courtyards upon which it is possible to set one's foot on the level of the original pavement. Here, again, the earthquake seems to have come before the work was completed. There are figures outlined on the walls, but never sculptured. Others have been begun, but never finished. You can see where the chisel stopped—you can even detect which was the last mark it made on the surface. One traces here, in fact, the four processes of wall-decoration. In some places the space is squared off and ruled by the mechanic; in others, the subject is ready drawn within those spaces by the artist. Here the sculptor has carried it a stage farther; yonder the painter has begun to colour it.

More interesting, however, than aught else at Kalabshah is the Greek inscription of Silco of Ethiopia.* This inscription—made famous by the commentaries of Niebuhr and Letronne—was discovered by M. Gau in A.D. 1818. It consists of 21 lines very neatly written in red ink, and it dates from the sixth century of the Christian era. It commences thus:—

I, Silco, puissant king of the Nubians and all the Ethiopians,
I came twice as far as Talmis** and Taphis.***

* See Chapter XII., p. 278 of vol. I.

** TALMIS: (Kalabshah).

*** TAPHIS: (Tafah).

I fought against the Blemyes,* and God granted me the victory.
 I vanquished them a second time; and the first time
 I established myself completely with my troops.
 I vanquished them, and they supplicated me.
 I made peace with them; and they swore to me by their idols.
 I trusted them; because they are a people of good faith.
 Then I returned to my dominions in the Upper Country.
 For I am a powerful king.
 Not only am I no follower in the train of other kings,
 But I go before them.
 As for those who seek strife against me,
 I give them no peace in their homes till they entreat my pardon.
 For I am a lion on the plains, and a goat upon the mountains.
 etc. etc. etc.

The historical value of this inscription is very great. It shows that in the sixth century, while the native inhabitants of this part of the Valley of the Nile yet adhered to the ancient Egyptian faith, the Ethiopians of the south were professedly Christian.

The descendants of the Blemmys are a fine race; tall, strong, and of a rich chocolate complexion. Strolling through the village at sunset, we see the entire population—old men sitting at their doors; young men lounging and smoking; children at play. The women, with glittering white teeth and liquid eyes, and a profusion of gold and silver ornaments on neck and brow, come out with their little brown babies astride on hip or shoulder, to stare as we go by. One sick old woman, lying outside her hut on a palm-wood couch, raises herself for a moment on her elbow—then sinks back with a weary sigh, and turns her face to the wall. The mud dwellings here are built in and out of a maze of massive stone foundations, the remains of

* Blemyes:—The Blemyes were a nomadic race of Berbers, supposed to be originally of the tribe of Bilmas of Tibbous in the central desert, and settled as early as the time of Eratosthenes in that part of the Valley of the Nile which lies between the First and Second Cataracts. See *Le Nord de l'Afrique*, by M. V. DE ST. MARTIN. Paris, 1863, Section III. p. 73.

buildings once magnificent. Some of these walls are built in concave courses; each course of stones, that is to say, being depressed in the centre, and raised at the angles; which mode of construction was adopted in order to offer less resistance when shaken by earthquake.*

We observe more foundations built thus, at Tafah, where we arrive next morning. As the mason's work at Tafah is of a late Roman date, it follows that earthquakes were yet frequent in Nubia at a period long subsequent to the great shock of B.C. 27, mentioned by Eusebius. Travellers are too ready to ascribe everything in the way of ruin to the fury of Cambyses and the pious rage of the early Christians. Nothing, however, is easier than to distinguish between the damage done to the monuments by the hand of man, and the damage caused by subterranean upheaval. Mutilation is the rule in the one case; displacement in the other. At Denderah, for example, the injury done is wholly wilful; at Aboo Simbel, it is wholly accidental; at Karnak, it is both wilful and accidental. As for Kalabsheh, it is clear that no such tremendous havoc could have been effected by human means without the aid of powerful rams, fire, or gunpowder; any of which must have left unmistakeable traces.

At Tafah there are two little temples; one in picturesque ruin, one quite perfect, and now used as a stable. There are also a number of stone foundations; separate; quadrangular; subdivided into numerous small chambers, and enclosed in boundary walls, some of which are built in the concave courses just named.

* See *The Habitations of Man in all Ages*. V. LE DUC. Chap. IX. p. 93.

These substructions, of which the Painter counted eighteen, have long been the puzzle of travellers.*

Tafah is charmingly placed; and the seven miles which divide it from Kalabsheh—once, no doubt, the scene of a cataract—are perhaps the most picturesque on this side of Wady Halfeh. Rocky islets in the river; palm-groves, acacias, carobs, henna and castor-berry bushes, and all kinds of flowering shrubs, along the edges of the banks; fantastic precipices riven and pinnacled, here rising abruptly from the water's edge, and there from the sandy plain, make lovely sketches whichever way one turns. There are gazelles, it is said, in the ravines behind Tafah; and one of the natives—a truculent fellow in a ragged shirt and dirty white turban—tells how, at a distance of three hours up a certain glen, there is another Birbeh, larger than either of these in the plain, and a great standing statue taller than three men. Here, then, if the tale be true, is another ready-made discovery for whoever may care to undertake it.

This same native, having sold a necklace to the Idle Man and gone away content with his bargain, comes back by and by with half the village at his heels, requiring double price. This modest demand being refused, he rages up and down like a maniac; tears off his turban; goes through a wild manual exer-

* They probably mark the site of a certain Coptic monastery described in an ancient Arabic MS. quoted by E. Quatremere, which says that "in the town of Tafah there is a fine monastery of Ansoun. It is very ancient; but so solidly built, that after so great a number of years it still stands uninjured. Near this monastery, facing the mountain, are situated fifteen villages." See *Mémoires Hist. et Géographiques sur l'Égypte et la Nubie*, par E. QUATREMERE. Paris, 1811, vol. II. p. 55.

The monastery and the villages were, doubtless, of Romano-Egyptian construction in the first instance, and may originally have been a sacred College, like the sacred College at Philæ.

cise with his spear; then sits down in stately silence, with his friends and neighbours drawn up in a semi-circle behind him.

This, it seems, is Nubian for a challenge. He has thrown down his gauntlet in form, and demands trial by combat. The noisy crowd, meanwhile, increases every moment. Reïs Hassan looks grave, fearing a possible fracas; and the Idle Man, who is reading the morning service down below (for it is on a Sunday morning) can scarcely be heard for the clamour outside. In this emergency, it occurs to the Writer to send a message ashore informing these gentlemen that the Howadjis are holding mosque in the Dahabeeyah, and entreating them to be quiet till the hour of prayer is past. The effect of the message, strange to say, is instantaneous. The angry voices are at once hushed. The challenger puts on his turban. The assembled spectators squat in respectful silence on the bank. A whole hour goes by thus, so giving the storm time to blow over; and when the Idle Man reappears on deck, his would-be adversary comes forward quite pleasantly to discuss the purchase afresh.

It matters little how the affair ended; but I believe he was offered his necklace back in exchange for the money paid, and preferred to abide by his bargain. It is as evidence of the sincerity of the religious sentiment in the minds of a semi-savage people,* that I have thought the incident worth telling.

* "The peasants of Tafa relate that they are the descendants of the few Christian inhabitants of the city who embraced the Mahommedan faith when the country was conquered by the followers of the Prophet; the greater part of their brethren having either fled or been put to death on that event taking place. They are still called Oulad el Nusara, or the Christian progeny."—*Travels in Nubia*: BURCKHARDT. London 1819, p. 121.

We are now less than forty miles from Philæ; but the head wind is always against us, and the men's bread is exhausted, and there is no flour to be bought in these Nubian villages. The poor fellows swept out the last crumbs from the bottom of their bread-chest three or four days ago, and are now living on quarter-rations of lentil soup, and a few dried dates bought at Wady Halfeh. Patient and depressed, they crouch silently beside their oars, or forget their hunger in sleep. For ourselves, it is painful to witness their need, and still more painful to be unable to help them. Talhamy, whose own stores are at a low ebb, vows he can do nothing. It would take his few remaining tins of preserved meat to feed fifteen men for two days, and of flour he has barely enough for the Howadjis. Hungry? well, yes—no doubt they are hungry. But what of that? They are Arabs; and Arabs bear hunger as camels bear thirst. It is nothing new to them. They have often been hungry before—they will often be hungry again. Enough! It is not for the ladies to trouble themselves about such fellows as these!

Excellent advice, no doubt; but hard to follow. Not to be troubled, and not to do what little we can for the poor lads, is impossible. When that little means laying violent hands on Talhamy's reserve of eggs and biscuits, and getting up lotteries for prizes of chocolate and tobacco, that worthy evidently considers that we have taken leave of our wits.

Under a burning sky, we touch for an hour or two at Gertasseh, and then push on for Dabod. The limestone quarries at Gertasseh are full of votive sculptures and inscriptions; and the little ruin—a mere cluster of graceful columns supporting a fragment of cornice—

stands high on the brink of a cliff overhanging the river. Take it as you will, from above or below, looking North or looking South, it makes a charming sketch.

If transported to Dabod on that magic carpet of the fairy-tale, one would take it for a ruin on the "beached margent" of some placid lake in dreamland. It lies between two bends of the river, which here flows wide, showing no outlet and seeming to be girdled by mountains and palm-groves. The Temple is small and uninteresting; begun, like Dakkeh, by an Ethiopian king, and finished by Ptolemies and Cæsars. The one curious thing about it is a secret cell, most cunningly devised. Adjoining the sanctuary is a dark side-chamber; in the floor of the side-chamber is a pit, once paved over; in one corner of the pit is a man-hole opening into a narrow passage; and in the narrow passage are steps leading up to a secret chamber constructed in the thickness of the wall. We saw other secret chambers in other Temples;* but not one in which the old approaches were so perfectly preserved.

From Dabod to Philæ is but ten miles; and we are bound for Torrigoor, which is two miles nearer. Now Torrigoor is that same village at the foot of the beauti-

* In these secret chambers (the entrance to which was closed by a block of masonry so perfectly fitted as to defy detection) were kept, says M. Mariette, the images of gold and silver and lapis lazuli, the precious vases, the sistrums, the jewelled collars, and all the portable treasures of the Temples. We saw a somewhat similar pit and small chamber in a corner of the Temple of Dakkeh, and some very curious crypts and hiding places under the floor of the dark chamber to the E. of the Sanctuary at Philæ, all of course long since broken open and rifled. But we had strong reason to believe that the Painter discovered the whereabouts of a hidden chamber or passage to the W. of the Sanctuary, yet closed, with all its treasures probably intact. We had, however, no means of opening the wall, which is of solid masonry.

ful sand-drift, near which we moored on our way up the river; and here we are to stay two days, followed by at least a week at Philæ. No sooner, therefore, have we reached Torrigoor, than Reïs Hassan and three sailors start for Assouan to buy flour. Old Ali, Riskalli, and Moosa, whose homes lie in the villages round about, get leave of absence for a week; and we find ourselves reduced all at once to a crew of five, with only Khaleefeh in command. Five, however, are as good as fifty, when the Dahabeeyah lies moored and there is nothing to do; and our five, having succeeded in buying some flabby Nubian cakes and green lentils, are now quite happy. So the Painter pitches his tent at the top of the sand-drift; and the Writer sketches the ruined convent opposite; and L. and the Little Lady write no end of letters; and the Idle Man, with Mehemet Ali for a retriever, shoots quail; and everybody is satisfied.

Hapless Idle Man!—hapless, but homicidal. If he had been content to shoot only quail, and had not taken to shooting babies! What possessed him to do it? Not—not, let us hope—an ill-directed ambition, foiled of crocodiles! He went serene and smiling, with his gun under his arm, and Mehemet Ali in his wake. Who so light of heart as that Idle Man? Who so light of heel as that turbaned retriever? We heard our sportsman popping away presently in the barley. It was a pleasant sound, for we knew his aim was true. "Every shot," said we, "means a bird." We little dreamed that one of those shots meant a baby.

All at once, a woman screamed. It was a sharp, sudden scream, following a shot—a scream with a ring of horror in it. Instantly it was caught up from

point to point, growing in volume and seeming to be echoed from every direction at once. At the same moment, the bank became alive with human beings. They seemed to spring from the soil—women shrieking and waving their arms; men running; all making for the same goal. The Writer heard the scream, saw the rush, and knew at once that a gun accident had happened.

A few minutes of painful suspense followed. Then Mehemet Ali appeared, tearing back at the top of his speed; and presently—perhaps five minutes later, though it seemed like twenty—came the Idle Man; walking very slowly and defiantly, with his head up, his arms folded, his gun gone, and an immense rabble at his heels.

Our scanty crew, armed with sticks, flew at once to the rescue, and brought him off in safety. We then learned what had happened.

A flight of quail had risen; and as quail fly low, skimming the surface of the grain and diving down again almost immediately, he had taken a level aim. At the instant that he fired, and in the very path of the quail, a woman and child who had been squatting in the barley, sprang up screaming. He at once saw the coming danger; and, with admirable presence of mind, drew the charge of his second barrel. He then hid his cartridge-box and hugged his gun, determined to hold it as long as possible. The next moment he was surrounded, overpowered, had the gun wrenched from his grasp, and received a blow on the back with a stone. Having captured the gun, one or two of the men let go. It was then that he shook off the rest, and came back to the boat. Mehemet Ali at the same

time flew to call a rescue. He, too, came in for some hard knocks, besides having his shirt rent, and his turban torn off his head.

Here were we, meanwhile, with less than half our crew, a private war on our hands, no captain, and one of our three guns in the hands of the enemy. What a scene it was! A whole village, and apparently a very considerable village, swarming on the bank; all hurrying to and fro; all raving, shouting, gesticulating. If we had been on the verge of a fracas at Tafah, here we were threatened with a siege.

Drawing in the plank between the boat and the shore, we held a hasty council of war.

The woman being unhurt, and the child, if hurt at all, hurt very slightly, we felt justified in assuming an injured tone, calling the village to account for a case of cowardly assault, and demanding instant restitution of the gun. We accordingly sent Talhamy to parley with the head-man of the place and peremptorily demand the gun. We also bade him add—and this we regarded as a master-stroke of policy—that if due submission was immediately made, the Howadji, one of whom was a Hakeem, would permit the father to bring his child on board to have its hurts attended to.

Outwardly indifferent, inwardly not a little anxious, we waited the event. Talhamy's back being towards the river, we had the whole semicircle of swarthy faces full in view—bent brows, flashing eyes, glittering teeth; all anger, all scorn, all defiance. Suddenly the expression of the faces changed—the change beginning with those nearest the speaker, and spreading gradually outwards. It was as if a wave had passed over them. We knew then that our *coup* was made. Talhamy

returned. The villagers crowded round their leaders, deliberating. Numbers now began to sit down; and when a Nubian sits down, you may be sure that he is no longer dangerous.

Presently—after perhaps a quarter of an hour—the gun was brought back uninjured, and an elderly man carrying a blue bundle appeared on the bank. The plank was now put across; the crowd was kept off; and the man with the bundle, and three or four others, were allowed to pass.

The bundle being undone, a little brown imp of about four years of age, with shaven head and shaggy scalp-lock, was produced. He whimpered at first, seeing the strange white faces; but when offered a fig, forgot his terrors, and sat munching it like a monkey. As for his wounds, they were literally skin-deep, the shot having but slightly grazed his shoulders in four or five places. The Idle Man, however, solemnly sponged the scratches with warm water, and L. covered them with patches of sticking-plaister. Finally, the father was presented with a Napoleon; the patient was wrapped in one of his murderer's shirts; and the first act of the tragedy ended. The second and third acts were to come.

When the Painter and the Idle Man talked the affair over, they agreed that it was expedient, for the protection of future travellers, to lodge a complaint against the village; and this mainly on account of the treacherous blow dealt from behind, at a time when the Idle Man (who had not once attempted to defend himself) was powerless in the hands of a mob. They therefore went next day to Assouan; and the governor, charming as ever, promised that justice should be

done. Meanwhile we moved the Dahabeeyah to Philæ, and there settled down for a week's sketching.

Next evening came a woful deputation from Torri-goor, entreating forgiveness, and stating that fifteen villagers had been swept off to prison.

The Idle Man explained that he no longer had anything to do with it; that the matter, in short, was in the hands of justice, and would be dealt with according to law. Hereupon the spokesman gathered up a handful of imaginary dust, and made believe to scatter it on his head.

"O dragoman!" he said, "tell the Howadji that there is no law but his pleasure, and no justice but the will of the Governor!"

Summoned next morning to give evidence, the Idle Man went betimes to Assouan, where he was received in private by the Governor and Moodeer. Pipes and coffee were handed, and the usual civilities exchanged. The Governor then informed his guest that fifteen men of Torri-goor had been arrested; and that fourteen of them unanimously identified the fifteenth as the one who struck the blow.

"And now," said the Governor, "before we send for the prisoners, it will be as well to decide on the sentence. What does his Excellency wish done to them?"

The Idle Man was puzzled. How could he offer an opinion, being ignorant of the Egyptian civil code? and how could the sentence be decided upon before the trial?

The Governor smiled serenely.

"But," he said, "this is the trial."

Being an Englishman, it necessarily cost the Idle

Man an effort to realise the full force of this explanation—an explanation which, in its sublime simplicity, epitomised the whole system of the judicial administration of Egyptian law. He hastened, however, to explain that he cherished no resentment against the culprit or the villagers, and that his only wish was to frighten them into a due respect for travellers in general.

The Governor hereupon invited the Moodeer to suggest a sentence; and the Moodeer—taking into consideration, as he said, his Excellency's lenient disposition—proposed to award to the fourteen innocent men one month's imprisonment each; and to the real offender two months' imprisonment, with a hundred and fifty blows of the bastinado.

Shocked at the mere idea of such a sentence, the Idle Man declared that he must have the innocent set at liberty; but consented that the culprit, for the sake of example, should be sentenced to the one hundred and fifty blows—the punishment to be remitted after the first few strokes had been dealt. Word was now given for the prisoners to be brought in.

The gaoler marched first, followed by two soldiers. Then came the fifteen prisoners—I am ashamed to write it!—chained neck to neck in single file.

One can imagine how the Idle Man felt at this moment.

Sentence being pronounced, the fourteen looked as if they could hardly believe their ears; while the fifteenth, though condemned to his one hundred and fifty strokes ("seventy-five to each foot," specified the Governor), was overjoyed to be let off so easily.

He was then flung down; his feet were fastened

soles uppermost; and two soldiers proceeded to execute the sentence. As each blow fell, he cried:—"God save the Governor! God save the Moodeer! God save the Howadji!"

When the sixth stroke had been dealt, the Idle Man turned to the Governor and formally interceded for the remission of the rest of the sentence. The Governor, as formally, granted the request; and the prisoners, weeping for joy, were set at liberty.

The Governor, the Moodeer, and the Idle Man then parted with a profusion of compliments; the Governor protesting that his only wish was to be agreeable to the English, and that the whole village should have been bastinadoed, had his Excellency desired it.

We spent eight enchanted days at Philæ; and it so happened, when the afternoon of the eighth came round, that for the last few hours the Writer was alone on the island. Alone, that is to say, with only a sailor in attendance, which was virtually solitude; and Philæ is a place to which solitude adds an inexpressible touch of pathos and remoteness.

It has been a hot day, and there is dead calm on the river. My last sketch finished, I wander slowly round from spot to spot, saying farewell to Pharaoh's Bed—to the Painted Columns—to every terrace, and palm, and shrine, and familiar point of view. I peep once again into the mystic chamber of Osiris. I see the sun set for the last time from the roof of the Temple of Isis. Then, when all that wondrous flush of rose and gold has died away, comes the warm after-glow. No words can paint the melancholy beauty of

Philæ at this hour. The surrounding mountains stand out jagged and purple against a pale amber sky. The Nile is glassy. Not a breath, not a bubble, troubles the inverted landscape. Every palm is twofold; every stone is doubled. The big boulders in mid-stream are reflected so perfectly that it is impossible to tell where the rock ends and the water begins. The Temples, meanwhile, have turned to a subdued golden bronze; and the pylons are peopled with shapes that glow with fantastic life, and look ready to step down from their places.

The solitude is perfect, and there is a magical stillness in the air. I hear a mother crooning to her baby on the neighbouring island—a sparrow twittering in its little nest in the capital of a column below my feet—a vulture screaming plaintively among the rocks in the far distance.

I look; I listen; I promise myself that I will remember it all in years to come—all these solemn hills, these silent colonnades, these deep, quiet spaces of shadow, these sleeping palms. Lingered till it is all but dark, I at last bid them farewell, fearing lest I may behold them no more.

CHAPTER XX.

Silsilis and Edfoo.

GOING, it cost us four days to struggle up from Assouan to Mahatta; returning, we slid down—thanks to our old friend the Sheykh of the Cataract—in one short, sensational half-hour. He came—flat-faced, fishy-eyed, fatuous as ever—with his head tied up in the same old yellow handkerchief, and with the same chibouque in his mouth. He brought with him a following of fifty stalwart Shellalees; and under his arm he carried a tattered red flag. This flag, on which were embroidered the crescent and star, he hoisted with much solemnity at the prow.

Consigned thus to the protection of the Prophet; windows and tambooshy* shuttered up; doors closed; breakables removed to a place of safety, and everything made snug, as if for a storm at sea, we put off from Mahatta at seven A.M. on a lovely morning in the middle of March. The Philæ, instead of threading her way back through the old channels, strikes across to the Libyan side, making straight for the Big Bab—that formidable rapid which as yet we have not seen. All last night we heard its voice in the distance; now, at every stroke of the oars, that rushing sound draws nearer.

The Sheykh of the Cataract is our captain, and his men are our sailors to-day; Reïs Hassan and the crew

* *Ar.* Tambooshy—*i.e.*, saloon sky-light.

having only to sit still and look on. The Shellalees, meanwhile, row swiftly and steadily. Already the river seems to be running faster than usual; already the current feels stronger under our keel. And now, suddenly, there is sparkle and foam on the surface yonder—there are rocks ahead; rocks to right and left; eddies everywhere. The Sheykh lays down his pipe, kicks off his shoes, and goes himself to the prow. His second in command is stationed at the top of the stairs leading to the upper deck. Six men take the tiller. The rowers are reinforced, and sit two to each oar.

In the midst of these preparations, when everybody looks grave, and even the Arabs are silent, we all at once find ourselves at the mouth of a long and narrow strait—a kind of ravine between two walls of rock—through which, at a steep incline, there rushes a roaring mass of waters. The whole Nile, in fact, seems to be thundering in wild waves down that terrible channel.

It seems, at first sight, impossible that any Dahabeeyah should venture that way and not be dashed to pieces. Neither does there seem room for boat and oars to pass. The Sheykh, however, gives the word—his second echoes it—the men at the helm obey. They put the Dahabeeyah straight at that monster mill-race. For one breathless second we seem to tremble on the edge of the fall. Then the Philæ plunges in headlong!

We see the whole boat slope down bodily under our feet. We feel the leap—the dead fall—the staggering rush forward. Instantly the waves are foaming and boiling up on all sides, flooding the lower deck, and covering the upper deck with spray. The men

ship their oars, leaving all to helm and current; and, despite the hoarse tumult, we distinctly hear those oars scrape the rocks on either side.

Now the Sheykh, looking for the moment quite majestic, stands motionless with uplifted arm; for at the end of the pass there is a sharp turn to the right—as sharp as a street corner in a narrow London thoroughfare. Can the Philæ, measuring 100 feet from stem to stern, ever round that angle in safety? Suddenly, the uplifted arm is waved—the Sheykh thunders “Daffet!” (helm)—the men, steady and prompt, put the helm about—the boat, answering splendidly to the word of command, begins to turn before we are out of the rocks; then, shooting round the corner at exactly the right moment, comes out safe and sound, with only an oar broken!

Great is the rejoicing. Reïs Hassan, in the joy of his heart, runs to shake hands all round; the Arabs burst into a chorus of “Taibs” and “Salames;” and Talhamy, coming up all smiles, is set upon by half-a-dozen playful Shellalees, who snatch his kefiâh from his head, and carry it off as a trophy. The only one unmoved is the Sheykh of the Cataract. His momentary flash of energy over, he slouches back with the old stolid face; slips on his shoes; drops on his heels; lights his pipe; and looks more like an owl than ever.

We had fancied till now that the Cataract Arabs for their own profit, and travellers for their own glory, had grossly exaggerated the dangers of the Big Bab. But such is not the case. The Big Bab is in truth a serious undertaking; so serious that I doubt whether any English boatmen would venture to take such a

boat down such a rapid, and between such rocks, as the Shellalee Arabs took the Philæ that day.

All Dahabeeyahs, however, are not so lucky. Of thirty-four that shot the fall this season, several had been slightly damaged, and one was so disabled that she had to lie up at Assouan for a fortnight to be mended. Of actual shipwreck, or injury to life and limb, I do not suppose there is any real danger. The Shellalees are wonderfully cool and skilful, and have abundant practice. Our Painter, it is true, preferred rolling up his canvases and carrying them round on dry land by way of the desert; but this was a precaution that neither he nor any of us would have dreamed of taking on account of our own personal safety. There is, in fact, little, if anything, to fear; and the traveller who foregoes the descent of the Cataract, foregoes a very curious sight, and a very exciting adventure.

At Assouan we bade farewell to Nubia and the blameless Ethiopians, and found ourselves once more traversing the Nile of Egypt. If instead of five miles of Cataract we had crossed five hundred miles of sea or desert, the change could not have been more complete. We left behind us a dreamy river, a silent shore, an ever-present desert. Returning, we plunged back at once into the midst of a fertile and populous region. All day long, now, we see boats on the river; villages on the banks; birds on the wing; husbandmen on the land; men and women, horses, camels and asses, passing perpetually to and fro on the towing-path. There is always something moving, something doing. The Nile is running low, and the shadoofs—three deep, now—are in full swing from morning till night. Again the

smoke goes up from clusters of unseen huts at close of day. Again we hear the dogs barking from hamlet to hamlet in the still hours of the night. Again, towards sunset, we see troops of girls coming down to the river-side with their water-jars on their heads. Those Arab maidens, when they stand with garments tightly tucked up and just their feet in the water, dipping the goollah at arm's length in the fresher gush of the current, almost tempt one's pencil into the forbidden paths of caricature.

Kom Ombo is a magnificent torso. It was as large once as Denderah—perhaps larger; for, being on the same grand scale, it was a double Temple and dedicated to two Gods, Horus and Sevek;* the Hawk and the Crocodile. Now there remain only a few giant columns buried to within eight or ten feet of their gorgeous capitals; a superb fragment of architrave; one broken wave of sculptured cornice and some fallen blocks graven with the names of Ptolemies and Cleopatras.

A great double doorway, a hall of columns, and a double sanctuary, are said to be yet perfect; though no longer accessible. The roofing blocks of three halls, one behind the other, and a few capitals, are yet visible behind the portico. What more may lie buried below the surface, none can tell. We only know that an ancient city and a mediæval hamlet have been slowly engulfed; and that an early Temple, contemporary with the Temple of Amada, once stood within the sacred enclosure. The sand here has been accumulating for

* "Sebek est un dieu solaire. Dans un papyrus de Boulak, il est appelé fils d'Isis, et il combat les ennemis d'Osiris; c'est une assimilation complète à Horus, et c'est à ce titre qu'il était adoré à Ombos."—*Dict. Arch.* P. PIERRET. Paris, 1875.

2000 years. It lies forty feet deep, and has never been excavated. It will never be excavated now; for the Nile is gradually sapping the bank, and carrying away piecemeal from below what the desert has buried from above. Half of one noble pylon—a cataract of sculptured blocks—strews the steep slope from top to bottom. The other half hangs suspended on the brink of the precipice. It cannot hang so much longer. A day must soon come when it will collapse with a crash, and thunder down like its fellow.

Between Kom Ombo and Silsilis, we lost our Painter. Not that he either strayed or was stolen; but that, having accomplished the main object of his journey, he was glad to seize the first opportunity of getting back quickly to Cairo. That opportunity—represented by a noble Duke honeymooning with a steam-tug—happened half-way between Kom Ombo and Silsilis. Painter and Duke being acquaintances of old, the matter was soon settled. In less than a quarter of an hour, the big picture and all the paraphernalia of the studio were transported from the stern-cabin of the *Philæ* to the stern-cabin of the steam-tug; and our Painter—fitted out with an extempore canteen, a cook-boy, a waiter, and his fair share of the necessaries of life—was soon disappearing gaily in the distance at the rate of twenty miles an hour. If the Happy Couple, so weary of head-winds, so satiated with Temples, followed that vanishing steam-tug with eyes of melancholy longing, the Writer at least asked nothing better than to drift on with the *Philæ*.

Still, the Nile is long, and life is short; and the tale told by our logbook was certainly not encouraging. When we reached Silsilis on the morning of the

17th of March, the north wind had been blowing with only one day's intermission since the 1st of February.

At Silsilis, one looks in vain for traces of that great barrier which once blocked the Nile at this point. The stream is narrow here, and the sandstone cliffs come down on both sides to the water's edge. In some places there is space for a footpath; in others, none. There are also some sunken rocks in the bed of the river—upon one of which, by the way, a Cook's steamer had struck two days before. But of such a mass as could have dammed the Nile, and, by its disruption not only have caused the river to desert its bed at Philæ,* but have changed the whole physical and climatic conditions of Lower Nubia, there is no sign whatever.

The Arabs here show a rock fantastically quarried in the shape of a gigantic umbrella, to which they pretend some king of old attached one end of a chain with which he barred the Nile. It may be that in this apocryphal legend there survives some memory of the ancient barrier.

The cliffs of the western bank are rich in memorial niches, votive shrines, tombs, historical stelæ, and inscriptions. These last date from the VIth to the XXIIId Dynasties. Some of the tombs and alcoves are very curious. Ranged side by side in a long row close above the river, and revealing glimpses of seated figures and gaudy decorations within, they look like private boxes with their occupants. In most of these we found mutilated triads of Gods,** sculptured and painted; and

* See Chap. XI. p. 259 of vol. 1.

** "Le point de départ de la mythologie égyptienne est une *Triade*." CHAMPOLLION, *Lettres d'Égypte*, etc., XI^e Lettre. Paris 1868. These Triads are best studied at Gerf Hossayn and Kalabsheh.

in one larger than the rest were three niches, each containing three deities.

The great Speos of Horus, the last Pharaoh of the XVIIIth Dynasty, lies farthest north, and the memorial shrines of the Rameses family lie farthest south of the series. The first is a long gallery, like a cloister supported on four square columns; and is excavated parallel with the river. The walls inside and out are covered with delicately executed sculptures in low relief, some of which yet retain traces of colour. The triumph of Horus on his return from conquest in the land of Cush, and the famous subject on the south wall described by M. Mariette * as one of the few really lovely things in Egyptian art, have been too often engraved to need description. The votive shrines of the Rameses family are grouped all together in a picturesque nook green with bushes to the water's edge. There are three; the work of Seti I., Rameses II., and Menephthah—lofty alcoves, each like a little proscenium, with painted cornices and side pillars, and groups of Kings and Gods still bright with colour. In most of the votive sculptures of Silsilis there figure two deities but rarely seen elsewhere; namely Sevek, the Crocodile God of the province, and Hapi, the lotus-crowned God of the Nile. This last was, in fact, the tutelary deity of the spot, and was worshipped at Silsilis with special rites. Hymns in his honour are found carved here and

* "L'un (paroi du sud) représente une déesse nourrissant de son lait divin le roi Horus, encore enfant. L'Égypte n'a jamais, comme la Grèce, atteint l'idéal du beau . . . mais en tant qu'art Égyptien, le bas-relief du Spéos de Gebel-Silsileh est une des plus belles œuvres que l'on puisse voir. Nulle part, en effet, la ligne n'est plus pure, et il règne dans ce tableau une certaine douceur tranquille qui charme et étonne à la fois."—*Itinéraire de la Haute Égypte*. A. MARIETTE: 1872, p. 246.

there upon the rocks.* Most curious of all, however, is a Goddess named Ta-ur-t,** represented in one of the side subjects of the shrine of Rameses II. This charming person, who has the body of a hippopotamus and the face of a woman, wears a tie-wig and a robe of state with five capes, and looks like a cross between a Lord Chancellor and a Coachman. Behind her stand Thoth and Nut; all three receiving the homage of Queen Nofreari, who advances with an offering of two sistrums. As a hippopotamus crowned with the disk and horns we had met with this Goddess before. She is not uncommon as a terra-cotta amulet; and we had already met with her at Philæ, where she occupies a prominent place in the façade of the Mammisi. But the grotesque elegance of her attire at Silsilis is, I imagine, quite unique.

The interest of the western bank centres in its sculptures and inscriptions; the interest of the eastern bank, in its quarries. We rowed over to a point nearly opposite the shrines of the Ramessides, and, climbing a steep verge of débris, came to the mouth of a narrow cutting between walls of solid rock, from forty to fifty feet in height. These walls are smooth, clean-cut, and faultlessly perpendicular. The colour of the sand-

* See *Sallier Papyrus*, No. 2. HYMN TO THE NILE—translation by G. MASPERO. Paris, 1868.

** *Ta-ur-t*, or *Apet the Great*. "Cette Déesse à corps d'hippopotame debout et à mamelles pendantes, paraît être une sorte de déesse nourrice. Elle semble, dans le bas temps, je ne dirai pas se substituer à Maut, mais compléter le rôle de cette déesse. Elle est nommée la grande nourrice; et présidait aux chambres où étaient représentées les naissances des jeunes divinités."—*Dict. Arch.* P. PIERRET. Paris, 1875.

"In the heavens, this Goddess personified the constellation Ursa Major, or the Great Bear."—*Guide to the First and Second Egyptian Rooms*. S. BIRCH. London, 1874.

Ta-ur-t was the wife of Typhon.

stone is rich amber. The passage is about ten feet in width and perhaps four hundred in length. Seen at a little after mid-day, with one side in shadow, the other in sunlight, and a narrow ribbon of blue sky overhead, it is like nothing else in the world; unless, perhaps, the entrance to Petra.

Following this passage, we came presently to an immense area, at least as large as Belgrave Square; beyond which, separated by a thin partition of rock, opened a second and somewhat smaller area. On the walls of these huge amphitheatres, the chisel-marks and wedge-holes were as fresh as if the last blocks had been taken hence but yesterday; yet it is some 2000 years since the place last rang to the blows of the mallet, and echoed back the voices of the workmen. From the days of the Theban Pharaohs to the days of the Ptolemies and Cæsars, those echoes can never have been silent. The Temples of Karnak and Luxor, of Goornah, of Medinet Haboo, of Esneh and Edfoo and Hermonthis, all came from here, and from the quarries on the opposite side of the river.

Returning, we climbed long hills of chips; looked down into valleys of débris; and came back at last to the river-side by way of an ancient inclined plane, along which the blocks were wont to be slid down to the transport boats below. But the most wonderful thing about Silsilis is the way in which the quarrying has been done. In all these halls and passages and amphitheatres, the sandstone has been sliced out smooth and straight, like hay from a hayrick. Everywhere the blocks have been taken out square; and everywhere the best of the stone has been extracted, and the worst left. Where it was fine in grain and even in colour, it

has been cut with the nicest economy. Where it was whitish, or brownish, or traversed by veins of violet, it has been left standing. Here and there, we saw places where the lower part had been removed, and the upper part left projecting; like the overhanging storeys of our old mediæval timber houses. Compared with this puissant and perfect quarrying, our rough-and-ready blasting looks like the work of savages.

Struggling hard against the wind, we left Silsilis that same afternoon. The wrecked steamer was now more than half under water. She had broken her back and begun filling immediately, with all Cook's party on board. Being rowed ashore with what necessities they could gather together, these unfortunates had been obliged to encamp in tents borrowed from the Moodeer of the district. Luckily for them, a couple of homeward-bound Dahabeeyahs came by next morning, and took off as many as they could accommodate. The Duke's steam-tug received the rest. The tents were still there; and a gang of natives, under the superintendence of the Moodeer, were busy getting off all that could be saved from the wreck.

As evening drew on, our head-wind became a hurricane; and that hurricane lasted, day and night, for thirty-six hours. All this time the Nile was driving up against the current in great rollers, like rollers on the Cornish coast when tide and wind set together from the west. To hear them roaring past in the darkness of the night—to feel the Philæ rocking, shivering, straining at her mooring-ropes, and bumping perpetually against the bank, was far from pleasant. By day, the scene was extraordinary. There were no clouds; but the air was thick with sand, through which

the sun glimmered feebly. Some palms, looking gray and ghost-like on the bank above, bent as if they must break before the blast. The Nile was yeasty, and flecked with brown foam, large lumps of which came swirling every now and then against our cabin windows. The opposite bank was simply nowhere. Judging only by what was visible from the deck, one would have vowed that the Dahabeeyah was moored against an open coast, with an angry sea coming in.

The wind fell about five A.M. the second day; when the men at once took to their oars, and by breakfast-time brought us to Edfoo. Nothing now could be more delicious than the weather. It was a cool, silvery, misty morning—such a morning as one never knows in Nubia, where the sun is no sooner up than one is plunged at once into the full blaze and stress of day. There were donkeys waiting for us on the bank, and our way lay for about a mile through barley flats and cotton plantations. The country looked rich; the people smiling and well-conditioned. We met a troop of them going down to the Dahabeeyah with sheep, pigeons, poultry, and a young ox for sale. Crossing a back-water bridged by a few rickety palm-trunks, we now approached the village, which is perched, as usual, on the mounds of the ancient city. Meanwhile the great pylons—seeming to grow larger every moment—rose, creamy in light, against a soft blue sky.

Riding through lanes of huts, we came presently to an open space and a long flight of roughly-built steps in front of the Temple. At the top of these steps we were standing on the level of the modern village. At the bottom we saw the massive pavement that marked the level of the ancient city. From that level rose the

pylons which even from afar off had looked so large. We now found that those stupendous towers not only soared to a height of about seventy-five feet above our heads, but plunged down to a depth of at least forty more beneath our feet.

Ten years ago nothing was visible of the great Temple of Edfoo save the tops of these pylons. The rest of the building was as much lost to sight as if the earth had opened and swallowed it. Its courtyards were choked with foul débris. Its sculptured chambers were buried under forty feet of soil. Its terraced roof was a maze of closely-packed huts, swarming with human beings, poultry, dogs, kine, asses, and vermin. Thanks to the enlightened liberality of the present ruler of Egypt, M. Mariette has been enabled to cleanse these Augæan stables. Writing himself of this tremendous task, he says:—"I caused to be demolished the sixty-four houses which encumbered the roof, as well as twenty-eight more which approached too near the outer wall of the Temple. When the whole shall be isolated from its present surroundings by a massive wall, the work of restoration at Edfoo will be accomplished."*

That wall has not yet been built; but the encroaching mound has been cut clean away all round the building, now standing free in a deep open space, the sides of which are in some places as perpendicular as the quarried cliffs of Silsilis. In the midst of this pit, like a risen God issuing from the grave, the huge building stands before us in the sunshine, erect and perfect. The effect at first sight is overwhelming.

* Letter of M. Mariette to Vte E. DE ROUGÉ; *Revue Archéologique*, vol. II. p. 33, 1860.

Through the great doorway, fifty feet in height, we catch glimpses of a grand courtyard, and of a vista of doorways, one behind another. Going slowly down, we see farther into those dark and distant halls at every step. At the same time the pylons, covered with gigantic sculptures, tower higher and higher, and seem to shut out the sky. The custode—a pigmy of six foot two, in semi-European dress—looks up grinning, expectant of backsheesh. For there is actually a custode here, and, which is more to the purpose, a good strong gate, through which neither pilfering visitors nor pilfering Arabs can pass unnoticed.

Who enters that gate crosses the threshold of the past, and leaves two thousand years behind him. In these vast courts and storied halls all is unchanged. Every pavement, every column, every stair, is in its place. The roof, but for a few roofing-stones missing just over the sanctuary, is not only uninjured, but in good repair. The hieroglyphic inscriptions are as sharp and legible as the day they were cut. If here and there a capital, or the face of a human-headed deity, has been mutilated, these are blemishes which at first one scarcely observes, and which in no wise mar the wonderful effect of the whole. We cross that great courtyard in the full blaze of the morning sunlight. In the colonnades on either side there is shade, and in the pillared portico beyond, a darkness as of night; save where a patch of deep blue sky burns through a square opening in the roof, and is matched by a corresponding patch of blinding light on the pavement below. Hence we pass on through a hall of columns, two transverse corridors, a side chapel, a series of pitch-dark side chambers, and a sanctuary. Outside all

these, surrounding the actual Temple on three sides, runs an external corridor open to the sky, and bounded by a superb wall full forty feet in height. When I have said that the entrance-front, with its twin pylons and central doorway, measures 250 feet in width by 125 feet in height; that the first courtyard measures more than 160 feet in length by 140 in width; that the entire length of the building is 450 feet, and that it covers an area of 80,000 square feet, I have stated facts of a kind which convey no more than a general idea of largeness to the ordinary reader. Of the harmony of the proportions, of the amazing size and strength of the individual parts, of the perfect workmanship, of the fine grain and creamy amber of the stone, no description can do more than vaguely suggest an indefinite notion.

Edfoo and Denderah may almost be called twin Temples. They belong to the same period. They are built very nearly after the same plan.* They are even allied in a religious sense; for the myths of Horus** and Hathor*** are interdependent; the one being strictly the complement of the other. Thus in the inscriptions of Edfoo we find perpetual allusion to the cultus of Denderah, and vice versa. Both Edfoo and Denderah are rich in inscriptions; but as the extent of wall-space

* Edfoo is the elder Temple; Denderah the copy. Where the architect of Denderah has departed from his model, it has invariably been for the worse.

** *Horus*:—"Dieu adoré dans plusieurs nomes de la basse Egypte. Le personnage d'Horus se rattache sous des noms différents, à deux générations divines. Sous le nom de Haroëris il est né de Seb et Nout, et par conséquent frère d'Osiris, dont il est le fils sous un autre nom. . . . Horus, armé d'un dard avec lequel il transperce les ennemis d'Osiris, est appelé Horus le Justicier."—*Dict. Arch.* P. P. PIERRET, article "*Horus*."

*** *Hathor*:—"Elle est, comme Neith, Maut, et Nout, la personnification de l'espace dans lequel se meut le soleil, dont Horus symbolise le lever: aussi son nom, Hat-hor, signifie-t-il littéralement, l'habitation d'Horus."—*Ibid.*, article "*Hathor*."

is greater at Edfoo, so is the literary wealth of this Temple greater than the literary wealth of Denderah. It also seemed to me that the surface was more closely filled in at Edfoo than at Denderah. Every wall, every ceiling, every pillar, every architrave, every passage and side-chamber however dark, every staircase, every doorway, the outer wall, of the Temple the inner side of the great wall of circuit, the huge pylons from top to bottom, are not only covered, but crowded, with figures and hieroglyphs. Among these we find no enormous battle-subjects as at Abou Simbel—no heroic recitals, like the poem of Pentaour. Those went out with the Pharaohs, and were succeeded by tableaux of religious rites and dialogues of gods and kings. Such are the stock subjects of Ptolemaic edifices. They abound at Denderah and Esneh, as well as at Edfoo. But at Edfoo there are more inscriptions of a miscellaneous character than in any Temple of Egypt; and it is precisely this secular information that is to us so priceless. Here are geographical lists of Nubian and Egyptian nomes, with their principal cities, their products, and their tutelary gods; lists of tributary provinces and princes; lists of temples, and of the lands pertaining thereunto; lists of canals, of ports, of lakes; kalendars of feasts and fasts; astronomical tables; genealogies and chronicles of the gods; lists of the priests and priestesses of both Edfoo and Denderah, with their names; lists also of singers and assistant functionaries; lists of offerings; hymns; invocations; and such a profusion of religious legends as make of the walls of Edfoo alone a complete text-book of Egyptian mythology.*

* *Rapport sur une Mission en Egypte*. VICOMTE E. DE ROUGÉ. See *Revue Arch., Nouvelle Série*, vol. x. p. 63.

No great collection of these inscriptions, like the "Denderah" of M. Mariette, has yet been published; but every now and then some young and enterprising Egyptologist, such as M. Naville or M. Jacques de Rougé, plunges for awhile into the depths of the Edfoo mine and brings back as much precious ore as he can carry.* Some most singular and interesting details have thus been brought to light. One inscription, for instance, records exactly in what month, and on what day and at what hour, Isis gave birth to Horus. Another tells all about the sacred boats. We know now that Edfoo possessed at least two; and that one was called Hor-Hat, or The First Horus, and the other Āa-Māfek, or Great of Turquoise. These boats, it would appear, were not merely for carrying in procession, but for actual use upon the water. Another text—one of the most curious—informs us that Hathor of Denderah paid an annual visit to Horus (or Hor-Hat) of Edfoo, and spent some days with him in his Temple. The whole ceremonial of this fantastic trip is given in detail. The Goddess travelled in her boat called Neb-Mer-t, or Lady of the Lake. Horus, like a polite host, went out in his boat Hor-Hat, to meet her. The two deities with their attendants then formed one procession, and so came to Edfoo, where the Goddess was entertained with a succession of festivals.**

One would like to know whether Horus duly returned all these visits; and if the Gods, like modern Emperors, had a gay time among themselves.

* I am informed by Professor G. Maspero that one of his pupils, M. de Rochemonteix, has been in Egypt since November 1875 with the express object of copying these Edfo inscriptions, by commission of the French government.

** *Textes Géographiques du Temple d'Edfo*, par M. J. DE ROUGÉ. *Revue Arch.*, vol. XII. p. 209.

Other questions inevitably suggest themselves, sometimes painfully, sometimes ludicrously, as one paces chamber after chamber, corridor after corridor, sculptured all over with strange forms and stranger legends. What about these Gods whose genealogies are so intricate; whose mutual relations are so complicated; who wedded and became parents; who exchanged visits, and who even travelled* at times to distant countries? What about those who served them in the Temples; who robed and unrobed them; who celebrated their birthdays, and paraded them in stately processions, and consumed the lives of millions in erecting these mountains of masonry and sculpture to their honour? We know now with what elaborate rites the Gods were adored; what jewels they wore; what hymns were sung in their praise. We know from what a subtle and philosophical core of solar myths their curious personal adventures were evolved. We may also be quite sure that the hidden meaning of these legends was almost wholly lost sight of in the later days of the religion,** and that the Gods were accepted for what they seemed to be, and not for what they symbolised. What, then, of their worshippers? Did they really believe all these things, or were any among them tormented with doubts of the Gods? Were there sceptics in those days who wondered how two hierogrammates could look each other in the face without laughing?

The custode told us that there were 242 steps to the top of each tower of the propylon. We counted

* See "The Possessed Princess" (Tablet of Rameses XII.) Translated by S. BIRCH, Esq., LL.D., etc. *Records of the Past*, vol. IV.

** See APPENDIX III., *Religious Belief of the Ancient Egyptians*.

224, and dispensed willingly with the remainder. It was a long pull: but had the steps been four times as many, the sight from the top would have been worth the climb. The chambers in the pylons are on a grand scale, with wide bevelled windows like the mouths of monster letter-boxes, placed at regular intervals all the way up. Through these windows the great flagstuffs and pennons were regulated from within. The two pylons communicate by a terrace over the central doorway. The parapet of this terrace and the parapets of the pylons above, are plentifully scrawled with names, many of which were left there by the French soldiers of 1799.

The cornices of these two magnificent towers are unfortunately gone; but the total height without them is 125 feet. From the top, as from the minaret of the great mosque at Damascus, one looks down into the heart of the town. Hundreds of mud-huts thatched with palm-leaves, hundreds of little courtyards, lie mapped out beneath one's feet; and as the Fellah lives in his yard by day, using his hut merely as a sleeping place at night, one looks down, like the *Diable Boiteux*, upon the domestic doings of a roofless world. We see people moving to and fro, unconscious of strange eyes watching them from above—men lounging, smoking, sleeping in shady corners—children playing—infants crawling on all fours—women cooking at clay ovens in the open air—cows and sheep feeding—poultry scratching and pecking—dogs basking in the sun. The huts look more like the lairs of prairie-dogs than the dwellings of human beings. The little mosque with its one dome and stunted minaret, so small, so far below, looks like a clay toy. Beyond the village, which

reaches far and wide, lie barley fields, and cotton patches, and palm-groves, bounded on one side by the river, and on the other by the desert. A wide road, dotted over with moving specks of men and cattle, cleaves its way straight through the cultivated land and out across the sandy plain beyond. We can trace its course for miles where it is only a trodden track in the desert. It goes, they tell us, direct to Cairo. On the opposite bank glares a hideous white sugar-factory; and, bowered in greenery, a country villa of the Khedive. The broad Nile flows between. The sweet Theban hills gleam through a pearly haze on the horizon.

All at once, a fitful breeze springs up, blowing in little gusts and swirling the dust in circles round our feet. At the same moment, like a beautiful spectre, there rises from the desert close by an undulating semi-transparent stalk of yellow sand, which grows higher every moment, and begins moving northward across the plain. Almost at the same instant, another appears a long way off towards the south, and a third comes gliding mysteriously along the opposite bank. While we are watching the third, the first begins throwing off a wonderful kind of plume, which follows it, waving and melting in the air. And now the stranger from the south comes up at smooth, tremendous pace, towering at least 500 feet above the desert; till, meeting some cross-current, it is snapped suddenly in twain. The lower half instantly collapses; the upper, after hanging suspended for a moment, spreads and floats slowly, like a cloud. In the meanwhile, other and smaller columns form here and there—stalk a little way—waver—disperse—form again—and again drop

away in dust. Then the breeze falls, and puts an abrupt end to this extraordinary spectacle. In less than two minutes there is not a sand-column left. As they came, they vanish—suddenly.

Such is the landscape that frames the Temple; and the Temple, after all, is the sight that one comes up here to see. There it lies far below our feet, the courtyard with its almost perfect pavement; the flat roof compact of gigantic monoliths; the wall of circuit with its panoramic sculptures; the portico, with its screen and pillars distinct in brilliant light against inner depths of dark; each pillar a shaft of ivory, each square of dark a block of ebony. So perfect, so solid, so splendid is the whole structure; so simple in unity of plan; so complex in ornament; so majestic in completeness, that one feels as if it solved the whole problem of religious architecture.

Take it for what it is—a Ptolemaic structure preserved in all its integrity of strength and finish—it is certainly the finest extant Temple in Egypt. It brings before us, with even more completeness than Denderah, the purposes of its various parts, and the kind of ceremonial for which it was designed. Every corridor and chamber tells its own story. Even the names of the different chambers are graven upon them in such wise that nothing, says M. Mariette,* would be easier than

* "Not only the names of the chambers, but their dimensions in cubits and sub-divisions of cubits are given. The name of the architect, Imhotep-Ur-Se-Phthah (Imhotep-The-Great-Son-of-Phthah), is also recorded." See *Itinéraire de la Haute Égypte*. A. Mariette-Bey, 1872, p. 241. Professor G. Maspero informs me, however, that this is not the name of the human architect, but of the *divine* designer of the Temple. "Ce n'est pas le nom de l'architecte *humain* qui a bâti le temple, mais celui de l'architecte *divin*. Imhotep le grand fils de Ptah, est le Dieu Imhotep de la triade Memphite à qui on attribue les plans du Temple." *Letter of Professor G. Maspero to the Author, April 1878*.

to reconstruct the ground-plan of the whole building in hieroglyphic nomenclature. That neither the Ptolemaic building nor the Ptolemaic mythus can be accepted as strictly representative of either pure Egyptian art or pure Egyptian thought, must of course be conceded. Both are modified by Greek influences, and have so far departed from the Pharaonic model. But then we have no equally perfect specimen of the Pharaonic model. The Ramesseum is but a grand fragment. Karnak and Medinet Haboo are aggregates of many Temples and many styles. Abydos is still half-buried. Amid so much that is fragmentary, amid so much that is ruined, the one absolutely perfect structure—Ptolemaic though it be—is of incalculable interest, and equally incalculable value.

While we are dreaming over these things, trying to fancy how it all looked when the sacred flotilla came sweeping up the river yonder and the procession of Hor-Hat issued forth to meet the Goddess-guest—while we are half-expecting to see the whole brilliant concourse pour out, priests in their robes of panther-skin, priestesses with the tinkling sistrum, singers and harpists, and bearers of gifts and emblems, and high functionaries rearing aloft the sacred boat of the God—in this moment a turbaned Muëddin comes out upon the rickety wooden gallery of the little minaret below, and intones the call to mid-day prayer. That plaintive cry has hardly died away before we see men here and there among the huts turning towards the east, and assuming the first postures of devotion. The women go on cooking and nursing their babies. I have seen Moslem women at prayer in the mosques of Constantinople, but never in Egypt.

Meanwhile, some children catch sight of us, and, notwithstanding that we are one hundred and twenty-five feet above their heads, burst into a frantic chorus of "Backsheesh!"

And now, with a last long look at the Temple and the wide landscape beyond, we come down again; and go to see a dismal little Mammesi three-parts buried among a wilderness of mounds close by. These mounds, which consist almost entirely of crude-brick débris with imbedded fragments of stone and pottery, are built up like coral-reefs, and represent the dwellings of some sixty generations. When they are cut straight through, as here round about the great Temple, the substance of them looks like rich plum-cake.

CHAPTER XXI.

Thebes.

WE had so long been the sport of destiny, that we hardly knew what to make of our good fortune when two days of sweet south wind carried us from Edfoo to Luxor. We came back to find the old mooring-place alive with Dahabeeyahs, and gay with English and American colours. These two flags well-nigh divide the river. In every twenty-five boats, one may fairly calculate upon an average of twelve English, nine American, two German, one Belgian, and one French. Of all these, our American cousins, ever helpful, ever cordial, are pleasantest to meet. Their flag stands to me for a host of brave and generous and kindly associations. It brings back memories of many lands and many faces. It calls up echoes of friendly voices, some far distant; some, alas! silent. Wherefore—be it on the Nile, or the Thames, or the high seas, or among Syrian camping-grounds, or drooping listlessly from the balconies of gloomy diplomatic haunts in continental cities—my heart warms to the stars and stripes whenever I see them.

Our arrival brought all the dealers of Luxor to the surface. They waylaid and followed us wherever we went; while some of the better sort—grave men in long black robes and ample turbans—installed themselves on our lower deck, and lived there for a fortnight. Go upstairs when we would, whether before

breakfast in the morning, or after dinner in the evening, there we always found them; patient; imperturbable; ready to rise up, and salaam, and produce from some hidden pocket a purseful of scarabs or a bundle of votive statuettes. Some of these gentlemen were Arabs, some Copts—all polite, plausible, and mendacious.

Where Copt and Arab drive the same doubtful trade, it is not easy to define the shades of difference in their dealings. As workmen, the Copts are perhaps the most artistic. As salesmen, the Arabs are perhaps the less dishonest. Both sell more forgeries than genuine antiquities. Be the demand what it may, they are prepared to meet it. Thothmes is not too heavy, nor Cleopatra too light, for them. Their carvings in old sycamore wood, their porcelain statuettes, their hieroglyphed limestone tablets, are executed with a skill that almost defies detection. As for genuine scarabs of the highest antiquity, they are turned out by the gross every season. Engraved, glazed, and administered to the turkeys in the form of boluses, they acquire by the simple process of digestion a degree of venerableness that is really charming.

Side by side with the work of production goes on the work of excavation. The professed diggers colonise the western bank. They live rent-free among the tombs; drive donkeys or work shadoofs by day, and spend their nights searching for treasure. Some hundreds of families live in this grim way, spoiling the dead and gone Egyptians for a livelihood.

Forgers, diggers, and dealers play, meanwhile, into one another's hands, and drive a roaring trade. Your Dahabeeyah, as I have just shown, is beset from the

moment you moor till the moment you pole off again from shore. The boy who drives your donkey, the guide who pilots you among the tombs, the half-naked Fellah who flings down his hoe as you pass, and runs beside you for a mile across the plain, have one and all an "antichi" to dispose of. The turbaned official who comes, attended by his secretary and pipe-bearer, to pay you a visit of ceremony, warns you against imposition and hints at genuine treasures, to which he alone possesses the key. The gentlemanly native who sits next to you at dinner has a wonderful scarab in his pocket. In short, every man, woman, and child about the place is bent on selling a bargain; and the bargain, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, is valuable in so far as it represents the industry of Luxor—but no farther. A good thing, of course, is to be had occasionally; but the good thing never comes to the surface as long as a market can be found for the bad. It is only when the dealer finds he has to do with an experienced customer, that he produces the best he has. I should not, for my own part, like to buy anything at Luxor without first taking the opinion of the English Consul. His experience is great, and his courtesy inexhaustible. The Prussian Consul has also a fine judgment in antiquities.

Flourishing as it is, the trade of Luxor labours, however, under some uncomfortable restrictions. Private excavation being absolutely prohibited, the digger lives in dread of being found out by the Governor. The forger, who has nothing to fear from the Governor, lives in dread of being found out by the tourist. As for the dealer, whether he sells an antique or an imitation, he is equally liable to punishment.

In the one case he commits an offence against the state; and in the other, he obtains money under false pretences. Meanwhile, the Governor, who is a man of strict probity, deals out such even-handed justice as he can, and does his best to enforce the law on both sides of the river.

By a curious accident, L. and the Writer once actually penetrated into a forger's workshop. Not knowing that it had been abolished, we went to a certain house in which a certain Consulate had once upon a time been located, and there knocked for admission. An old deaf Fellaha opened the door, and after some hesitation showed us into a large unfurnished room with three windows. In each window there stood a workman's bench strewn with scarabs, amulets, and votive gods in every stage of progress. We examined these specimens with no little curiosity. Some were of wood; some were of limestone; some were partly coloured. The colours and brushes were there; to say nothing of files, gravers, and little pointed tools like gimlets. A magnifying glass of the kind used by engravers lay in one of the window-recesses. We also observed a small grindstone screwed to one of the benches and worked by a treadle; while a massive fragment of mummy-case in a corner behind the door showed whence came the old sycamore wood for the wooden statuettes. That three skilled workmen furnished with European tools had been busy in this room shortly before we were shown into it, was perfectly clear. We concluded that they had just gone away to breakfast.

Meanwhile we waited, expecting to be ushered into the presence of the Consul. In about ten minutes,

however, breathless with hurrying, arrived a well-dressed Arab whom we had never seen before. Distracted between his Oriental politeness and his desire to get rid of us, he bowed us out precipitately, explaining that the house had changed owners, and that the Power in question had ceased to be represented at Luxor. We heard him rating the old woman savagely, as soon as the door had closed behind us. I met that well-dressed Arab a day or two after, near the Governor's house; and he immediately vanished round the nearest corner.

Mariette Bey keeps a small gang of trained excavators always at work in the Necropolis of Thebes. These men are superintended by the Governor, and every mummy-case discovered is forwarded to Boulak unopened. Thanks to the courtesy of the Governor, we had the good fortune to be present one morning at the opening of a tomb. He sent to summon us, just as we were going to breakfast. With what alacrity we manned the felucca, and how we ate our bread and butter half in the boat and half on donkey-back, may easily be imagined. How well I remember that early morning ride across the Western plain of Thebes—the young barley rippling for miles in the sun; the little water-channel running beside the path; the white butterflies circling in couples; the wayside grave with its tiny dome and prayer-mat, its well and broken goollah, inviting the passer-by to drink and pray; the wild vine that trailed along the wall; the vivid violet of the vetches that blossomed unbidden in the barley. We had the mounds and pylons of Medinet Haboo to the left—the ruins of the Ramesseum to the right—the Colossi of the Plain and the rosy western mountains before us all

the way. How the great statues glistened in the morning light! How they towered up against the soft blue sky! Battered and featureless, they sat in the old patient attitude, looking as if they mourned the vanished springs.

We found the new tomb a few hundred yards in the rear of the Ramesseum. The diggers were in the pit; the Governor and a few Arabs were looking on. The vault was lined with brickwork above, and cut square in the living rock below. We were just in time; for already, through the sand and rubble with which the grave had been filled in, there appeared an outline of something buried. The men, throwing spades and picks aside, now began scraping up the dust with their hands, and a mummy-case came gradually to light. It was shaped to represent a body lying at length with the hands crossed upon the breast. Both hands and face were carved in high relief. The ground-colour of the sarcophagus was white;* the surface covered with hieroglyphed legends and somewhat coarsely painted figures of the four lesser Gods of the Dead. The face, like the hands, was coloured a brownish yellow and highly varnished. But for a little dimness of the gaudy hues, and a little flaking off of the surface here and there, the thing was as perfect as when it was placed in the ground. A small wooden box roughly put together lay at the feet of the mummy. This was taken

* This was, no doubt, an interment of the period of the XXIIIrd or XXIVth Dynasty, the style of which is thus described by M. Mariette:—"Succèdent les caisses à fond blanc. Autour de celles-ci court une légende en hiéroglyphes de toutes couleurs. Le devant du couvercle est divisé horizontalement en tableaux où alternent les représentations et les textes tracés en hiéroglyphes verdâtres. La momie elle-même est hermétiquement enfermée dans un cartonage cousu par derrière et peint de couleurs tranchantes."—*Notice des Monuments à Boulak*, p. 46. Paris, 1872.

out first, and handed to the Governor, who put it aside without opening it. The mummy-case was then raised upright, hoisted to the brink of the pit, and laid upon the ground.

It gave one a kind of shock to see it first of all lying just as it had been left by the mourners; then hauled out by rude hands, to be searched, unrolled, perhaps broken up as unworthy to occupy a corner in the Boulak collection. Once they are lodged and catalogued in a museum, one comes to look upon these things as "specimens," and forgets that they once were living beings like ourselves. But this poor mummy looked startlingly human and pathetic lying at the bottom of its grave in the morning sunlight.

After the sarcophagus had been lifted out, a small blue porcelain cup, a ball of the same material, and another little object shaped like a cherry, were found in the *débris*. The last was hollow, and contained something that rattled when shaken. The mummy, the wooden box, and these porcelain toys, were then removed to a stable close by; and the excavators, having laid bare what looked like the mouth of a bricked-up tunnel in the side of the tomb, fell to work again immediately. A second vault—perhaps a chain of vaults—it was thought would now be discovered.

We went away, meanwhile, for a few hours, and saw some of the famous painted tombs in that part of the mountain-side just above which goes by the name of Sheykh Abd-el-Koorneh.

It was a hot climb; the sun blazing over head; the cliffs reflecting light and heat; the white *débris* glaring under-foot. Some of the tombs up here are excavated in terraces, and look from a distance like rows of pi-

geon holes; others are perched in solitary ledges of rock; many are difficult of access; all are intolerably hot and oppressive. They were numbered half a century ago by the late Sir Gardner Wilkinson, and the numbers are there still. We went that morning into 14, 16, 17, and 35.

As a child, "*The Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*" had shared my affections with "*The Arabian Nights*." I had read every line of the old six-volume edition over and over again. I knew every one of the six hundred illustrations by heart. Now I suddenly found myself in the midst of old and half-forgotten friends. Every subject on these wonderful walls was already familiar to me. Only the framework, only the colouring, only the sand under-foot, only the mountain slope outside, were new and strange. It seemed to me that I had met all these kindly brown people years and years ago—perhaps in some previous stage of existence; that I had walked with them in their gardens; listened to the music of their lutes and tambourines; pledged them at their feasts. Here is the funeral procession that I know so well; and the trial scene after death, where the mummy stands upright in the presence of Osiris, and sees his heart weighed in the balance. Here is that well-remembered old fowler crouching in the rushes with his basket of decoys. One withered hand is lifted to his mouth; his lips frame the call; his thin hair blows in the breeze. I see now that he has placed himself to the leeward of the game; but that subtlety escaped me in the reading days of my youth. Yonder I recognise a sculptor's studio into which I frequently peeped at that time. His men are at work as actively as ever; but I marvel

that they have not yet finished polishing the surface of that red-granite colossus. This patient angler, still waiting for a bite, is another old acquaintance; and yonder, I declare, is that evening party at which I was so often an imaginary guest! Is the feast not yet over? Has that late comer whom we saw hurrying along just now in a neighbouring corridor not yet arrived? Will the musicians never play to the end of their concerto? Are those ladies still so deeply interested in the patterns of one another's ear-rings? It seems to me that the world has been standing still in here for these last five-and-thirty years.

Did I say five-and-thirty? Ah me! I think we must multiply it by ten, and then by ten again, ere we come to the right figure. These people lived in the time of the Thothmes and the Amenhoteps—a time upon which Rameses the Great looked back as we look back to the days of the Tudors and the Stuarts.

From the tombs above, we went back to the excavations below. The bricked-up opening had led, as the diggers expected, into a second vault; and another mummy-case, half-crushed by a fall of débris, had just been taken out. A third was found later in the afternoon. Curiously enough, they were all three mummies of women.

The Governor was taking his luncheon with the first mummy in the recesses of the stable, which had been a fine tomb once, but reeked now with manure. He sat on a rug, cross-legged, with a bowl of sour milk before him and a tray of most uninviting little cakes. He invited me to a seat on his rug, handed me his own spoon, and did the honours of the stable as pleasantly as if it had been a palace.

I asked him why the excavators, instead of working among these second-class graves, were not set to search for the tombs of the Kings of the XVIIIth Dynasty, supposed by M. Mariette to be waiting discovery in a certain valley called the Valley of the West. He shook his head. The way to the Valley of the West, he said, was long and difficult. Men working there must encamp upon the spot; and merely to supply them with water would be no easy matter. He was allowed, in fact, only a sum sufficient for the wages of fifty excavators; and to attack the Valley of the West with less than two hundred would be useless.

We had luncheon that morning, I remember, with the M. B.'s in the second hall of the Ramesseum. It was but one occasion among many; for the Writer was constantly at work on that side of the river, and we had luncheon in one or other of the western Temples every day. Yet that particular meeting stands out in my memory apart from the rest. I see the joyous party gathered together in the shade of the great columns—the Persian rugs spread on the uneven ground—the dragoman in his picturesque dress going to and fro—the brown and tattered Arabs, squatting a little way off, silent and hungry-eyed, each with his string of forged scarabs, his imitation gods, or his bits of mummy-case and painted cartonnage for sale—the glowing peeps of landscape framed in here and there through vistas of columns—the emblazoned architraves laid along from capital to capital overhead, each block sculptured with enormous cartouches yet brilliant with vermilion and ultramarine—the patient donkeys munching all together at a little heap of vetches in one corner—the intense depths of cloudless blue above. Of

all Theban ruins, the Ramesseum is the most cheerful. Drenched in sunshine, the warm limestone of which it is built seems to have mellowed and turned golden with time. No walls enclose it. No towering pylons overshadow it. It stands high, and the air circulates freely among those simple and beautiful columns. There are not many Egyptian ruins in which one can talk and be merry; but in the Ramesseum one may thoroughly enjoy the passing hour.

Whether Rameses the Great was ever actually buried in this place is a mystery which future discoveries may possibly solve; but that the Ramesseum and the tomb of Osymandias were one and the same building is a point upon which I never entertained a moment's doubt. Spending day after day among these ruins; sketching now here, now there; going over the ground bit by bit, and comparing every detail, I came at last to wonder how an identity so obvious could ever have been doubted. Diodorus was of course inaccurate; but then one as little looks for accuracy in Diodorus as in Homer. Compared with some of his topographical descriptions, the account he gives of the Ramesseum is a marvel of exactness. He describes* a building approached by two vast courtyards; a hall of pillars opening by way of three entrances from the second courtyard; a succession of chambers, including a sacred library; ceilings of azure "bespangled with stars;" walls covered with sculptures representing the deeds and triumphs of the king whom he calls Osymandias,**

* Diodorus, *Biblioth. Hist.*, Bk. i. chap. iv. The fault of inaccuracy ought, however, to be charged to Hecatæus, who was the authority followed here by Diodorus.

** Possibly the Smendes of Manetho, and the Ba-en-Ded whose cartouche is found by Brugsch on a sarcophagus in the museum at Vienna; see *Hist.*

amongst which are particularly noticed the assault of a fortress "environed by a river," a procession of captives without hands, and a series of all the Gods of Egypt, to whom the King was represented in the act of making offerings; finally, against the entrance to the second courtyard, three statues of the King, one of which, being of Syenite granite and made "in a sitting posture," is stated to be not only "the greatest in all Egypt," but admirable above all others "for its workmanship, and the excellence of the stone."

Bearing in mind that what is left of the Ramesseum is, as it were, only the backbone of the entire structure, one can still walk from end to end of the building, and still recognise every feature of this description. We turn our backs on the wrecked towers of the first propylon; crossing what was once the first courtyard, we leave to the left the fallen colossus; we enter the second courtyard, and see before us the three entrances to the hall of pillars, and the remains of two other statues; we walk up the central avenue of the great hall, and see above our heads architraves studded with yellow stars upon a ground colour so luminously blue that it almost matches the sky; thence, passing through a chamber lined with sculptures, we come to the library, upon the door-jambs of which Champollion found the figures of Thoth and Saf, the Lord of Letters and the Lady of the Sacred Books;* finally, among such fragments of sculptured decoration as yet remain, we find the King making offerings to a hieroglyphed list of Gods as well as to

d'Égypte, chap. x. p. 213, ed. 1859. Another claimant to this identification is found in a King named Se-Mentu, whose cartouches have been found by M. Mariette on some small gold tablets at Tanis.

* Letter XIV. p. 235. *Lettres d'Égypte*; Paris, 1868. See also Chap. XVIII. of the present volume; p. 130.

his deified ancestors; we see the train of captives, and the piles of severed hands;* and we discover an immense battle-piece, which is in fact a replica of the famous battle-piece at Aboo Simbel. This subject, like its Nubian prototype, yet preserves some of its colour. The enemy are shown to be fair-skinned and light-haired, and wear the same Syrian robes; and the river, more green than that at Aboo Simbel, is painted in zigzags in the same manner. The King, alone in his chariot, sends arrow after arrow against the flying foe. They leap into the river, and swim for their lives. Some are drowned; some cross in safety, and are helped out by their friends on the opposite bank. A red-haired chief, thus rescued, is suspended head-downwards by his soldiers, in order to let the water that he has swallowed run out of his mouth. The river is once more the Orontes; the city is once more Kades; the king is once more Rameses II.; and the incidents are again the incidents of the poem of Pentaour.

The one wholly unmistakable point in the narrative is, however, the colossal statue of Syenite, "the largest in Egypt." The siege and the river, the troops of captives are to be found elsewhere; but nowhere, save here, a colossus that answers to that description. This statue was larger than even the twin Colossi of the Plain. They measure eighteen feet and three inches across the shoulders; this measures twenty-two feet and four inches. They sit about fifty feet high, without their pedestals; this one must have lifted his head some ten feet higher still. "The measure of his foot," says Diodorus, "exceeded seven cubits;" the Greek cubit being a little over eighteen inches in length. The foot of

* See Champollion, Letter XIV., as above, p. 238.

the fallen Rameses measures nearly eleven feet in length by four feet ten inches in breadth. This, also, is the only very large colossus sculptured in the red Syenite of Assouan.*

Ruined almost beyond recognition as it is, one never doubts for a moment that this statue was indeed the final wonder of Egyptian workmanship. It most probably repeated in every detail the colossi of Aboo Simbel; but it surpassed them as much in finish of carving as in perfection of material. The stone is even more beautiful in colour than that of the famous obelisks of Karnak; and is so close and hard in grain, that the scarab-cutters of Luxor are said to use splinters of it as our engravers use diamonds, for the points of their graving tools. The solid contents of the whole, when entire, are calculated at 887 tons; so that, regarded merely as quantity and quality, it must have been the grandest block of granite in the world. How this astounding mass was transported from Assouan, how it was raised, how it was overthrown, are problems upon which a great deal of ingenious conjecture has been wasted. One traveller affirms that the wedge-marks of the destroyer are distinctly visible. Another, having carefully examined the fractured edges, declares that the keenest eye can detect neither wedge-marks nor any other evidences of violence. We looked for none of these signs and tokens. We never asked ourselves how or when the ruin had been done. It was enough that the mighty had fallen.

Inasmuch as one can clamber upon and measure

* The Syenite colossus of which the British Museum possesses the head, and which is popularly known as the Young Memnon, measured twenty-four feet in height before it was broken up by the French.

these stupendous fragments, the fallen colossus is more astonishing, perhaps, as a wreck than it would have been as a whole. Here, snapped across at the waist and flung helplessly back, lie a huge head and shoulders, to climb which is like climbing a rock. Yonder, amid piles of unintelligible débris, we see a great foot, and nearer the head, part of an enormous trunk, together with the upper halves of two huge thighs clothed in the usual shenti or striped tunic. The klast or headdress is also striped, and these stripes, in both instances, retain the delicate yellow colour with which they were originally filled in. To judge from the way in which this colour was applied, one would say that the statue was tinted rather than painted. The surface-work, wherever it remains, is as smooth and highly finished as the cutting of the finest gem. Even the ground of the superb cartouche on the upper half of the arm is elaborately polished. Finally, in the pit which it ploughed out in falling, lies the great pedestal, hieroglyphed with the usual pompous titles of Rameses Mer-Amen. Diodorus, knowing nothing of Rameses or his style, interprets the inscription after his own fanciful fashion:—"I am Osymandias, King of Kings. If any would know how great I am, and where I lie, let him excel me in any of my works."

The fragments of wall and shattered pylon that yet remain standing at the Ramesseum face N.W. and S.W. Hence it follows that some of the most interesting of the surface sculpture (being cut in very low relief) is so placed with regard to the light as to be actually invisible after midday. It was not till the occasion of my last visit, when I came early in the morning to make a certain sketch by a certain light, that I succeeded in

distinguishing a single figure of that celebrated tableau* on the S. wall of the Great Hall, in which the Egyptians are seen to be making use of the testudo and scaling ladder to assault a Syrian fortress. The wall sculptures of the second hall are on a bolder scale, and can be seen at any hour. Here Thoth writes the name of Rameses on the egg-shaped fruit of the persea tree, and processions of shaven priests carry on their shoulders the sacred boats of various Gods. In the centre of each boat is a shrine supported by winged genii or cherubim. The veils over these shrines, the rings through which the bearing-poles were passed, and all the appointments and ornaments of the *bari*, are distinctly shown. One seems here, indeed, to be admitted to a glimpse of those original shrines upon which Moses—learned in the sacred lore of the Egyptians—modelled, with but little alteration, his Ark of the Covenant.

Next in importance to Karnak, and second in interest to none of the Theban ruins, is the vast group of buildings known by the collective name of Medinet Haboo. To attempt to describe these would be to undertake a task as hopeless as the description of Karnak. Such an attempt lies, at all events, beyond the compass of these pages, so many of which have already been given to similar subjects. For it is of Temples as of mountains—no two are alike, yet all sound so much alike when described that it is scarcely possible to write about them without becoming monotonous. In the present instance, therefore, I will note only a few points of special interest, referring those who wish for

* See woodcut No. 340 in Sir G. Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, vol. I. edition, 1871.

fuller particulars to the elaborate account of Medinet Haboo in Murray's *Handbook of Egypt*.

In the second name of Medinet Haboo—Medinet being the common Arabic for city, and Haboo, Haboot, Aboo, or Taboo being variously spelled—there survives almost beyond doubt the ancient name of that famous city which the Greeks called Thebes. It is a name for which many derivations* have been suggested, but upon which the learned are not yet agreed.

The ruins at Medinet Haboo consist of a smaller Temple founded by Queen Hatasou of the XVIIIth Dynasty, a large and magnificent Temple entirely built by Rameses III. of the XXth Dynasty, and an extremely curious and interesting building, part palace, part fortress, which is popularly known as the Pavilion.

The walls of this pavilion, the walls of the great forecourt leading to the smaller Temple, and a corner of the original wall of circuit, are crowned in the Egyptian style with shield-shaped battlements, precisely as the Khetan and Amorite fortresses are battlemented in the sculptured tableaux at Aboo Simbel and elsewhere. From whichever side one approaches Medinet Haboo, these stone shields strike the eye as a new and interesting feature. They are, moreover, as far as I know, the only specimens of Egyptian battlementing that have survived destruction. Those of the wall of circuit are of the time of Rameses V.; those of the pavilion of the time of Rameses III.; and the latest, which are those of the forecourt, are of the period of Roman occupation.

As biographical material, the Temple and Pavilion

* Among these are *Abot* or *abode*; meaning the abode of Ammon; *Ta-Uaboo*, the mound; *Ta-Api*, the head or capital, etc. etc. See *Recherches sur le nom Égyptien de Thèbes*, CHABAS: 1863; *Textes Géographiques d'Edfoo*, J. DE ROUGÉ: *Revue Arch.*, Nouvelle Série, vol. XII. 1865; etc. etc.

at Medinet Haboo and the great Harris papyrus,* are to the life of Rameses III. precisely what Aboo Simbel, the Ramesseum, and the poem of Pentaour, are to the life of Rameses II. Great wars, great victories, magnificent praises of the prowess of the King, pompous lists of enemies slain and captured, inventories of booty and of precious gifts offered by the victor to the Gods of Egypt, in both instances cover the sculptured walls and fill the written pages. A comparison of the two masses of evidence—due allowance being made both ways for Oriental fervour of diction—shows that in Rameses III. we have to do with a king as brilliant, as valourous, and as successful as Rameses II.**

* The *Great Harris Papyrus* is described by Dr. Birch as "one of the finest, best written, and best preserved, that have been discovered in Egypt. It measures 133 feet long, by 16½ inches broad, and was found with several others in a tomb behind Medinet Haboo. Purchased soon after by the late A. C. Harris of Alexandria, it was subsequently unrolled and divided into seventy-nine leaves, and laid down on card-board. With the exception of some small portions which are wanting in the first, the rest of the text is complete throughout. The object of the papyrus is the address after death of the King, Rameses III., recounting the benefits he had conferred upon Egypt by his administration, and by the delivery of the country from foreign subjection, and also the immense gifts which he had conferred on the Temples of Egypt, of Ammon at Thebes, Tum at Heliopolis, and Phthah at Memphis, etc. The last part is addressed to the officers of the army, consisting partly of Sardinian and Libyan mercenaries, and to the people of Egypt, in the thirty-second year of his reign, and is a kind of posthumous panegyric discourse, or political will, like that of Augustus discovered at Ancyra. The papyrus itself consists of the following divisions, three of which are preceded by large coloured plates or vignettes:—Introduction: donations to the Theban deities; donations to the gods of Heliopolis; donations to the gods of Memphis; donations to the gods of the north and south; summary of donations; historical speech and conclusion. Throughout the monarch speaks in the first person, the list excepted." Introduction to *Annals of Rameses III.*; S. BIRCH: *Records of the Past*, vol. vi. p. 21; 1876.

** "Rameses III. was one of the most remarkable monarchs in the annals of Egypt. A period of political confusion and foreign conquest of the country preceded his advent to the throne. His father, Setnecht, had indeed succeeded in driving out the foreign invaders, and re-establishing the native dynasty of the Theban kings, the twentieth of the list of Manetho. But Rameses had a great task before him, called to the throne at a youthful age. . . . The first task of Rameses was to restore the civil government and military discipline. In his fifth year, he defeated the Maxyes and Libyans with great slaughter when they invaded Egypt, led by five chiefs; and in the same year he had

It may be that before the time of this Pharaoh certain Temples were used also as royal residences. It is possible to believe this of Temples such as Goornah and Abydos, the plan of which includes, besides the usual halls, side-chambers, and sanctuary, a number of other apartments, the uses of which are unknown. It may also be that former kings dwelt in houses of brick and carved woodwork, such as we see represented in the wall-paintings of various tombs.

It is at all events a fact that the only two royal palaces of which any vestiges have come down to the present day were erected by Rameses III. To one (not long since discovered in the mounds of Tel el Yahooodeh) reference has been made in a former chapter.* The other, or what remains of the other, is this little pavilion at Medinet Haboo.

also to repulse the Satu, or eastern foreigners, who had attacked Egypt. The maritime nations of the west, it appears, had invaded Palestine and the Syrian coast in his eighth year, and after taking Carchemish, a confederation of the *Palusata*, supposed by some to be the Pelasgi, *Tekharu* or Teuceri, *Sakalusa* or Siculi, *Tanau* or Daunians, if not Danai, and *Uasaša* or Osci, marched to the conquest of Egypt. It is possible that they reached the mouth of the eastern branch of the Nile. But Rameses concentrated an army at Taka, in Northern Palestine, and marched back to defend the Nile. Assisted by his mercenary forces, he inflicted a severe defeat on the confederated west, and returned with his prisoners to Thebes. In his eleventh year the Mashuasha or Maxyes, assisted by the Tahennu or Libyans, again invaded Egypt, to suffer a fresh defeat, and the country seems from this period to have remained in a state of tranquillity. . . . The vast Temple at Medinet Haboo, his palaces and treasury, still remain to attest his magnificence and grandeur; and if his domestic life was that of an ordinary Egyptian monarch, he was as distinguished in the battlefield as the palace. Treason, no doubt, disturbed his latter days, and it is not known how he died; but he expired after a reign of thirty-one years and some months, and left the throne to his son, it is supposed, about B.C. 1200." See *Remarks upon the Cover of the Granite Sarcophagus of Rameses III.*: S. BIRCH, LL.D., Cambridge, 1876. Opinion, it should be said, is divided on the subject of these Western nationalities. The late Vte E. de Rougé, M. Chabas, and others, identify the *Sakalusa*, or *Shakalash*, with the Siculi, the *Uasaša* with the Osci, &c. &c. Professor G. Maspero, on the contrary, sees in all these nations only various tribes of Asia Minor, and in *Shakalash*, or *Shagalash*, a striking resemblance to the name of the ancient city of *Sagalassos* in Pisidia.

* Chap. XV., p. 403.

It may not have been a palace. It may have been only a fortified gate; but though the chambers are small, they are well lighted, and the plan of the whole is certainly domestic in character. It consists, as we now see it, of two lodges connected by zigzag wings with a central tower. The lodges and tower stand to each other as the three points of an acute angle. These structures enclose an oblong courtyard leading by a passage under the central tower to the sacred enclosure beyond. So far as its present condition enables us to judge, this building contained only eight rooms; namely three, one above the other, in each of the lodges, and two over the gateway.* These three towers communicate by means of devious passages in the connecting wings. Two of the windows in the wings are adorned with balconies supported on brackets; each bracket representing the head and shoulders of a crouching captive, in the attitude of a gargoyle. The heads and dresses of these captives—conceived as they are in a vein of Gothic barbarism—are still bright with colour.

The central, or gateway-tower, is substantially perfect. The Writer, with help, got as high as the first chamber; the ceiling of which is painted in a rich and intricate pattern, as in imitation of mosaic. The top room is difficult of access; but can be reached by a good climber. Our friend F. W. S., who made his way up there a year or two before, found upon the

* "There is reason to believe that this is only a fragment of the building, and foundations exist which render it probable that the whole was originally a square of the width of the front, and had other chambers, probably in wood or brick, besides those we now find. This would hardly detract from the playful character of the design, and when coloured, as it originally was, and with its battlements or ornaments complete, it must have formed a composition as pleasing as it is unlike our usual conceptions of Egyptian art."—*Hist. of Architecture*, by J. FERGUSON, bk. i., ch. iv., p. 118. Lond. 1865.

walls some interesting sculptures of cups and vases, apparently part of an illustrated inventory of domestic utensils. The lid of one of these vases was represented as opening by means of a lever spooned out for the thumb to rest in, just like the lid of a German beer-mug of the present day.

The external decorations of the two lodges are of especial interest. The lower subjects are historical. Those upon the upper storeys are domestic or symbolical, and are among the most celebrated of Egyptian bas-reliefs. They have long been supposed to represent Rameses III. in his harem, entertained and waited upon by female slaves. In one group the king, distinguished always by his cartouches, sits at ease in a kind of folding chair, his helmet on his head, his sandalled feet upon a footstool, as one returned and resting after battle. In his left hand he holds a round object like a fruit. With the right he chucks under the chin an ear-ringed and necklaced damsel who presents a lotus blossom at his nose. In another much mutilated subject, they are represented playing a game at draughts. This famous subject—which can only be seen when the light strikes sidewise—would scarcely be intelligible save for the help to be derived from the cuts in Wilkinson and the plates in Rosellini. It is not that the sculptures are effaced, but that the great blocks which bore them are gone from their places, having probably been hurled down bodily upon the heads of the enemy during a certain siege of which the ruins bear evident traces.* Of the lady, there

* Medinet Haboo continued up to the period of the Arab invasion to be inhabited by the Coptic descendants of its ancient builders. They fled, however, before Amr and his army, since which time the place has been deserted. It is not known whether the siege took place at the time of the Arab invasion,

remains little beside one arm and the hand that holds the pawn. The table has disappeared. The king has lost his legs. It happens, however, though the table is missing, that the block next above it contained the pawns, which can still be discerned from below by the help of a glass. Rosellini mentions three or four more subjects of a similar character, including a second group of draught-players, all visible in his time. The Writer, however, looked for them in vain.

These tableaux are popularly supposed to illustrate the home-life of Rameses III., and to confirm the domestic character of the pavilion. Even the scarab-selling Arabs that haunt the ruins, even the donkey-boys of Luxor, call it the Hareem of the Sultan. Modern science, however, threatens to dispel one at least of these pleasant fancies.

The king, it seems, under the name of Rhampsinitus, is the hero of a very ancient legend related by Herodotus. While he yet lived, runs the story, he descended into Hades, and there played a game at draughts with the Goddess Demeter, from whom he won a golden napkin; in memory of which adventure, and of his return to earth, "the Egyptians," says Herodotus, "instituted a festival which they certainly celebrated in my day."* In another version as told by Plutarch, Isis is substituted for Demeter. Viewing these tales by the light of a certain passage of the Ritual, in which the happy dead is promised "power to transform himself at will, to play at draughts, to

or during the raid of Cambyses; but whenever it was, the place was evidently forced by the besiegers. The author of Murray's Handbook draws attention to the fact that the granite jambs of the doorway leading to the smaller Temple are cut through exactly at the place where the bar was placed across the door.

* Herodotus, bk. II. chap. 122.

repose in a pavilion," Dr. Birch has suggested that the whole of this scene may be of a memorial character, and represent an incident in the Land of Shades.*

Below these "hareem" groups come colossal bas-reliefs of a religious and military character. The King, as usual, smites his prisoners in presence of the Gods. A slender and spirited figure in act to slay, the fiery hero strides across the wall "like Baal** descended from the heights of heaven. His limbs are endued with the force of victory. With his right hand he seizes the multitudes; his left reaches like an arrow after those who fly before him. His sword is sharp as that of his father Mentu."***

Below these great groups run friezes sculptured with kneeling figures of vanquished chiefs, among whom are Libyan, Sicilian, Sardinian, and Etruscan leaders. Every head in these friezes is a portrait. The Libyan is beardless; his lips are thin; his nose is hooked; his forehead retreats; he wears a close-fitting cap with a

* "A Medinet Habou, dans son palais, il s'est fait représenter jouant aux dames avec des femmes qui, d'après certaines copies, semblent porter sur la tête les fleurs symbolique de l'Égypte supérieure et inférieure, comme les déesses du monde supérieur et inférieur, ou du ciel et de la terre. Cette dualité des déesses, qui est indiquée dans les scènes religieuses et les textes sacrés par la réunion de Satis et Anoucis, Pasht et Bast, Isis et Nephthys, etc., me fait penser que les tableaux de Medinet Habou peuvent avoir été considérés dans les légendes populaires comme offrant aux yeux l'allégorie de la scène du jeu de dames entre le roi et la déesse Isis, dont Hérodote a fait la Déméter égyptienne, comme il a fait d'Osiris le Dionysus du même peuple."—*Le Roi Rhampsinite et le Jeu des Dames*, par S. BIRCH. *Revue Arch.*, Nouvelle Série, vol. XII. p. 58. Paris: 1865.

** BAAL, written sometimes Bar, was, like Sutech, a God borrowed from the Phœnician mythology. The worship of Baal seems to have been introduced into Egypt during the XIXth dynasty. The other God here mentioned, Mentu or Month, was a solar deity adored in the Thebaid, and especially worshipped at Hermonthis, now Erment; a modern town of some importance, the name of which is still almost identical with the Per-Mentu of ancient days. Mentu was the Egyptian, and Baal the Phœnician god of war.

*** From one of the inscriptions at Medinet Habou, quoted by Chabas, See *Antiquité Historique*, ch. IV. p. 238. Ed. 1873.

pendant hanging in front of the ear. The features of the Sardinian chief* are no less Asiatic. He wears the usual Sardinian helmet surmounted by a ball and two spikes. The profile of the Sicilian closely resembles that of the Sardinian. He wears a head-dress like the modern Persian cap. As ethnological types, these heads are extremely valuable. Colonists not long since departed from the western coasts of Asia Minor, these early European settlers are seen with the Asiatic stamp of features; a stamp which has now entirely disappeared.

Other European nations are depicted elsewhere in these Medinet Haboo sculptures. Pelasgians from the Greek isles, Oscans perhaps from Pompeii, Daunians from the districts between Tarentum and Brundisium, figure here, each in their national costume. Of these, the Pelasgian alone resembles the modern European. On the left wall of the pavilion gateway, going up towards the Temple, there is a large bas-relief of Rameses III. leading a string of captives into the presence of Ammon Ra. Among these, the sculptures being in a high state of preservation, there are a number of Pelasgians, some of whom have features of the classical Greek type, and are strikingly handsome. The Pelasgic head-dress resembles our old infantry shako; and some of the men wear disc-shaped amulets pierced with a hole in the centre, through which is passed the chain that suspends it round the neck.

* It is a noteworthy fact (and one which has not, so far as I know, been previously noticed) that while the Asiatic and African chiefs represented in these friezes are insolently described in the accompanying hieroglyphic inscriptions as "the vile Libyan," "the vile Cushite," "the vile Mashuasha," and so forth, the European leaders, though likewise prostrate and bound, are more respectfully designated as "the Great (◊) of Sardinia," "the Great of Sicily," "the Great of Etruria," etc. etc. May this be taken as an indication that their strength as military powers was already more formidable than that of the Egyptians' nearer neighbours?

Leaving to the left a fine sitting statue of Khons in green basalt, and to the right his prostrate fellow, we pass under the gateway, cross a space of desolate crude-brick mounds, and see before us the ruins of the first pylon of the Great Temple of Khem. Once past the threshold of this pylon, we enter upon a succession of magnificent courtyards. The hieroglyphs here are on a colossal scale, and are cut deeper than any others in Egypt. They are also coloured with a more subtle eye to effect. Struck by the unusual splendour of some of the blues, and by a peculiar look of scintillation which they assumed in certain lights, I examined them particularly, and found that the effect had been produced by very subtle shades of gradation in what appeared at first sight to be simple flat tints. In some of the reeds, for instance, the ground-colour begins at the top of the leaf in pure cobalt, and passes imperceptibly down to a tint that is almost emerald green at the bottom.*

The inner walls of this great courtyard, and the outer face of the N.E. wall, are covered with sculptures outlined, so to say, in intaglio, and relieved in the hollow, so that the forms, though rounded, remain level with the general surface. In these tableaux the old world lives again. Rameses III., his sons and nobles, his armies, his foes, play once more the brief drama of life and death. Great battles are fought; great victories are won; the slain are counted; the captured drag their chains behind the victor's chariot;

* The grand blue of the ceiling of the colonnade of the Great Hypæthral Court is also very remarkable for brilliancy and purity of tone; while to those interested in decoration the capital and abacus of the second column to the right on entering this courtyard, offer an interesting specimen of polychrome ornamentation on a gold-coloured ground.

the king triumphs, is crowned, and sacrifices to the gods. Elsewhere more wars; more slaughter. There is revolt in Libya; there are raids on the Asiatic border; there are invaders coming in ships from the islands of the Great Sea. The royal standard is raised; troops assemble; arms are distributed. Again the king goes forth in his might, followed by the flower of Egyptian chivalry. "His horsemen are heroes; his foot soldiers are as lions that roar in the mountains." The king himself flames "like Mentu in his hour of wrath." He falls upon the foe "with the swiftness of a meteor." Here, crowded in rude bullock-trucks, the vanquished seek safety in flight. Yonder their galleys are sunk; their warriors are slain, drowned, captured, scathed, as it were, in a devouring fire. "Never again will they sow seed or reap harvest on the fair face of the earth."

"Behold!" says the Pharaoh, "Behold, I have taken their frontiers for my frontiers! I have devastated their towns, burned their crops, trampled their people under foot. Rejoice, O Egypt! Exalt thy voice to the heavens; for behold! I reign over all the lands of the barbarians! I King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Rameses III.*

Such, linked each to each by a running commentary of text, are the illustrations; the story is written elsewhere. Elaborately hieroglyphed in upwards of seventy closely-packed columns, it covers the whole eastern face of the great north tower of the second propylon. This propylon divides the Osiride and Hypæthral courts, so that the inscription faces those entering the Temple and precedes the tableaux.

* Inscriptions at Medinet Haboo. See Chabas' *Antiquité Historique*, chap. IV. Paris: 1876.

Not even the poem of Pentaour is more picturesque, not even the Psalms of David are more fervid, than the style of this great Chronicle.*

M. Mariette is of opinion that the Temple of Medinet Haboo, erected as it is on the side of the great Theban necropolis, is, like the Ramesseum, a funereal monument erected by Rameses III. in his own lifetime to his own memory. The caryatid colossi represent the king in the character of Osiris, and are in fact on a huge scale precisely what the ordinary funereal statuettes are upon a small scale. They would be out of place in any but a monumental edifice; and they alone suffice to determine the character of the building.

And such, no doubt, was the character of the Amenophium; of the little Temple called Dayr el Medinet; of the Temple of Queen Hatasu, known as Dayr el Bahree; of the Temple of Goornah; of every important structure, in short, erected upon this side of the river. Of the Amenophium there remain only a few sculptured blocks, a few confused foundations, and—last representatives of an avenue of statues of various sizes—the famous Colossi of the Plain.** The

* The whole of this chronicle is translated by M. Chabas in *L'Antiquité Historique*, chap. iv. p. 246, *et seq.* It is also engraved in full in Rosellini (*Monumenti Storici*); and has been admirably photographed by both M. Hammerschmidt and Signor Beata.

** These two statues—the best-known, probably, of all Egyptian monuments—have been too often described, painted, engraved, and photographed, to need more than a passing allusion. Their featureless faces, their attitude, their surroundings, are familiar as the Pyramids, even to those who know not Egypt. We all know that they represent Amenhotep, or Amunoph, III.; and that the northernmost was shattered to the waist by the earthquake of B.C. 27. Being heard to give out a musical sound during the first hour of the day, the statue was supposed by the ancients to be endowed with a miraculous voice. The Greeks, believing it to represent the fabled son of Tithonus and Aurora, gave it the name of Memnon; notwithstanding that the Egyptians themselves claimed the statues as portraits of Amenhotep III. Prefects, Consuls, Emperors,

Temple of Dayr el Bahree—built in terraces up the mountain side, and approached once upon a time by a magnificent avenue of sphinxes, the course of which is yet visible—would probably be, if less ruined, the most interesting temple on the western side of the river. The monumental intention of this building is perhaps shown by its dedication to Hathor, the Lady of Amenti.

As for the Temple of Goornah, it is, at least in part, as distinctly a memorial edifice as the Medici Chapel at Florence or the Superga at Turin. It was begun by Seti I. in memory of his father Rameses I., the founder of the XIXth Dynasty. Seti, however, died before the work was completed. Hereupon Rameses II., his son and successor, extended the general plan, finished the part dedicated to his grandfather, and added sculptures to the memory of Seti I. Later still, Menepthah, the son and successor of Rameses II., left his cartouches upon one of the doorways. The whole building, in short, is a family monument, and contains a family portrait gallery. Here all the personages whose names figure in the shrines of the Ramessides at Silsilis are depicted in their proper persons. In one tableau, Rameses I.,

and Empresses, came "to hear Memnon," as the phrase then ran. Among the famous visitors who travelled thither on this errand, we find Strabo, Germanicus, Hadrian, and the Empress Sabina. Opinion is divided as to the cause of this sound. There is undoubtedly a hollow space inside the throne of this statue, as may be seen by all who examine it from behind; and Sir G. Wilkinson, in expressing his conviction that the musical sound was a piece of priestly jugglery, represents the opinion of the majority. The author of a carefully considered article in the *Quarterly Review*, No. 276, April 1875, after bringing together and sifting the evidence on both sides, comes to the contrary conclusion, and attributes the sound to natural causes. The statue, which, like its companion, was originally one solid monolith of gritstone, was repaired with sandstone during the reign of Septimius Severus.

defunct, deified,* swathed, enshrined, and crowned like Osiris, is worshipped by Seti I. Behind Seti stands his Queen Tuaa, the mother of Rameses II. Elsewhere Seti I., being now dead, is deified and worshipped by Rameses II., who pours a libation to his father's statue. Through all these handsome heads there runs a striking family likeness. All more or less partake of that Dantesque type which characterises the portraits of Rameses II. in his youth. The features of Rameses I. and Seti I. are somewhat pinched and stern, like the Dante of elder days. The delicate profile of Queen Tuaa, which is curiously like some portraits of Queen Elizabeth, is perhaps too angular to be altogether pleasing. But in the well-known face of Rameses II. these harsher details vanish, and the beauty of the race culminates. The artists of Egyptian Renaissance, always great in profile-portraiture, are nowhere seen to better advantage than in this interesting series.

Adjoining what may be called the monumental part of the building, we find a number of halls and chambers, the uses of which are unknown. Most writers assume that they were the private apartments of the King. Some go so far as to give the name of Temple-Palaces to all these great funereal structures. M. Mariette has, however, suggested a much likelier

* This deification of the dead was not deification in the Roman sense; neither was it canonisation in the modern sense. The Egyptians believed the justified dead to be assimilated, or rather identified, in the spirit with Osiris, the beneficent Judge and Deity of the lower world. Thus, in their worship of ancestry, they adored not mortals immortalised, but the dead in Osiris, and Osiris in the dead.

It is worth noting, by the way, that notwithstanding the subsequent deification of Seti I., Rameses I. remained, so to say, the tutelary saint of the Temple. He alone is represented with the curious pointed and upturned beard, like a chamois horn reversed, which is the peculiar attribute of deity.

solution of the problem. He conceives that these Western Temples were erected in connection, though not in direct communication, with the royal tombs in the adjacent valley of Bab-el-Molook.

Now every Egyptian tomb of importance has its outer chamber or votive oratory, the walls of which are covered with paintings descriptive, in some instances, of the occupations of the deceased upon earth, and in others of the adventures of his soul after death. Here at stated seasons the survivors repaired with offerings. No priest, it would seem, of necessity officiated at these little services. A whole family would come, bringing the first fruits of their garden, the best of their poultry, cakes of home-made bread, bouquets of lotus blossoms. With their own hands they piled the altar, burned the incense, poured the libations. It is a scene constantly reproduced upon monuments* of every epoch. These votive oratories, however, are wholly absent in the valley of Bab-el-Molook. The royal tombs consist of only tunnelled passages and sepulchral vaults, the entrances to which were closed for ever as soon as the sarcophagus was occupied. Hence M. Mariette concludes that each memorial temple played to the tomb of its tutelary saint and sovereign that part which is played by the

* There is among the funereal tablets of the Boulak collection a small bas-relief sculpture representing the arrival of a family of mourners at the tomb of a deceased ancestor. The statue of the defunct sits at the upper end. The mourners are laden with offerings. One little child carries a lamb; another a goose. A scribe stands by, waiting to register the gifts. The tablet commemorates one Psamtiknefer-Sam, a hierogrammate under some king of the XXIVth Dynasty. The natural grace and simple pathos with which this little frieze is treated, lift it far above the level of ordinary Egyptian art; and it may fairly be said to bear comparison with the class of monuments lately discovered on the Eleusinian road at Athens.

external oratory attached to the tomb of a private individual.

An oratory on so grand a scale would imply an elaborate ceremonial. A dead and deified king would doubtless have his train of priests, his daily liturgies, processions, and sacrifices. All this again implies additional accommodation, and accounts, I venture to think, for any number of extra halls and chambers. Such sculptures as yet remain on the walls of these ruined apartments are, in fact, wholly funereal and sacrificial in character. It is also to be remembered that we have here a temple dedicated to two kings, and served most likely by a twofold college of priests.*

The wall-sculptures at Goornah are extremely beautiful, especially in those parts erected by Seti I. Where it has been accidentally preserved, the surface is as smooth, the execution as brilliant, as the finest mediæval ivory carving. Behind a broken column, for instance, that leans against the S.W. wall of the sanctuary,** one may see, by peeping this way and that, the ram's-head prow of a sacred boat, quite unharmed, and of surpassing delicacy. The modelling of the ram's head is simply faultless. It would indeed be scarcely too much to say that this one fragment, if all the rest had perished, would alone place the de-

* As early as the time of the Pyramid Kings, there were special priests and votive chapels attached to each pyramid. "Une dignité tout à fait particulier est celle que les inscriptions hiéroglyphiques désignent par le titre 'prophète de la pyramide, de tel pharaon.' Il paraît qu'après sa mort chaque roi était vénéré par un culte spécial." *Histoire d'Égypte*: BRUGSCH. 2d. ed., chap. v. p. 35. Leipzig: 1875.

** There is a very curious window at the end of this sanctuary, with grooves for the shutter, and holes in which to slip and drop the bar by which it was fastened.

corative sculpture of ancient Egypt in a rank second only to that of Greece.

The Temple of Goornah—northernmost of the Theban group—stands at the mouth of that famous valley called by the Arabs Bab-el-Molook, and by travellers, the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings. This valley may be described as a bifurcated ravine, ending in two *culs de sac*, and hemmed in on all sides by lime-stone precipices. It winds round behind the cliffs which face Luxor and Karnak, and runs almost parallel with the Nile. This range of cliffs is perforated on both sides with tombs. The priests and nobles of many dynasties were buried terrace above terrace on the side next the river. Back to back with them, in the silent and secret valley beyond, slept the kings in their everlasting sepulchres.

Most travellers moor for a day or two at Karnak, and thence make their excursion to Bab-el-Molook. By so doing they lose one of the most interesting rides in the neighbourhood of Thebes. L. and the Writer started from Luxor one morning about an hour after day-break, crossing the river at the usual point and thence riding northwards along the bank, with the Nile on the one hand, and the corn-lands on the other. In the course of such rides, one discovers the almost incredible fertility of the Thebaid. Every inch of arable ground is turned to account. All that grows, grows lustily. The barley ripples in one uninterrupted sweep from Medinet Haboo to a point half-way between the Ramesseum and Goornah. Next come plantations of tobacco, cotton, hemp, linseed, maize and lentils, so closely set, so rich in promise, that the country looks as if it were laid out in allotment ground for

miles together. Where the rice crop has been gathered, clusters of temporary huts have sprung up in the clearings; for the fellaheen come out from their crowded villages in "the sweet o' the year," and live in the midst of the crops which now they guard, and which presently they will reap. The walls of these summer huts are mere wattled fences of Indian corn straw, with bundles of the same laid lightly across the top by way of roofing. This pastoral world is everywhere up and doing. Here are men plying the shadoof by the river's brink; women spinning in the sun; children playing; dogs barking; larks soaring and singing overhead. Against the foot of the cliffs yonder, where the vegetation ends and the tombs begin, there flows a calm river edged with palms. A few months ago, we should have been deceived by that fairy water. We know now that it is the mirage.

Striking off by and by towards the left, we make for a point where the mountains recede and run low, and a wedge-like "spit" of sandy desert encroaches upon the plain. On the verge of this spit stands a clump of sycamores and palms. A row of old yellow columns supporting a sculptured architrave gleams through the boughs; a little village nestles close by; and on the desert slope beyond, in the midst of a desolate Arab burial-ground, we see a tiny mosque with one small cupola, dazzling white in the sunshine. This is Goornah. There is a spring here, and some girls are drawing water from the well near the Temple. Our donkeys slake their thirst from the cattle-trough—a broken sarcophagus that may once have held the mummy of a king. A creaking sakkieh is at work yonder, turned by a couple of red cows with mild

Hathor-like faces. The old man who drives them sits in the middle of the cog-wheel, and goes slowly round as if he was being roasted.

We now leave behind us the well, and the trees, and the old Greek-looking Temple, and turn our faces westward, bound for an opening yonder among cliffs pitted with the mouths of empty tombs. It is plain to see that we are now entering upon what was once a torrent-bed. Rushing down from the hills, the pent-up waters have here spread fan-like over the slope of the desert, strewing the ground with boulders, and ploughing it into hundreds of tortuous channels. Up that torrent-bed lies our road to-day.

The weird rocks stand like sentinels to right and left as one enters the mouth of the valley, and take strange shapes as of obelisks and sphinxes. Some, worn at the base, and towering like ruined pyramids above, remind us of tombs on the Appian Way. As the ravine narrows, the limestone walls rise higher. The chalky track glares underfoot. Piles of shivered chips sparkle and scintillate at the foot of the rocks. The cliffs burn at a white heat. The atmosphere palpitates like gaseous vapour. The sun blazes overhead. Not a breath stirs; neither is there a finger's breadth of shade on either side. It is like riding into the mouth of a furnace. Meanwhile one looks in vain for any sign of life. No blade of green has grown here since the world began. No breathing creature makes these rocks its home. All is desolation—such desolation as one dreams of in a world scathed by fire from heaven.

When we have gone a long way, always tracking up the bed of the torrent, we come to a place where our donkeys turn off from the main course and make

for what is evidently a forced passage cut clean through a wall of solid limestone. The place was once a mere recess in the cliffs, but on the farther side, masked by a natural barrier of rock, there lay another valley leading to a secluded amphitheatre among the mountains. The first Pharaoh who chose his place of burial among those hidden ways, must have been he who cut the pass and levelled the road by which we now travel. This cutting is Bab-el-Molook—the Gate of the Sultan; a name which doubtless perpetuates that by which the place was known to the old Egyptians. Once through the Gate, a grand mountain rises into view. Egypt is the land of strange mountains; and here is one that reproduces on a giant scale every feature of the pyramid of Ouenephes at Sakkarah. It is square; it rises stage above stage in ranges of columnar cliffs with slopes of débris between; and it terminates in a blunt four-sided peak nearly 2000 feet above the level of the plain.

Keeping this mountain always before us, we now follow the windings of the second valley, which is even more narrow, parched, and glaring than the first. Perhaps the intense heat makes the road appear longer than it really is; but it seems to us like several miles. At length the uniformity of the way is broken. Two small ravines branch off, one to the right, one to the left; and in both, at the foot of the rocks, there are here and there to be seen square openings, like cellar-doors, half sunk below the surface, and seeming to shoot downwards into the bowels of the earth. In another moment or so, our road ends suddenly in a wild tumbled waste, like an exhausted quarry, shut in all round by impending precipices, at the base of which more rock-cut portals peep out at different points.

From the moment when it first came into sight, I had made certain that in that pyramidal mountain we should find the Tombs of the Kings—so certain, that I can scarcely believe our guide when he assures us that these cellars are the places we have come to see, and that the mountain contains not a single tomb. We alight, however; climb a steep slope; and find ourselves on the threshold of No. 17.

“Belzoni-tomb,” says our guide; and Belzoni’s tomb, as we know, is the tomb of Seti the First.

I am almost ashamed to remember now that we took our luncheon in the shade of that solemn vestibule, and rested and made merry, before going down into the great gloomy sepulchre whose staircases and corridors plunged away into the darkness below, as if they led straight to the land of Amenti.

The tombs in the Valley of Bab-el-Molook are as unlike the tombs in the cliffs opposite Luxor as if the Theban kings and the Theban nobles were of different races and creeds. Those sacred scribes and dignitaries, with their wives and families and their numerous friends and dependents, were a joyous set. They loved the things of this life, and would fain have carried their pursuits and pleasures with them into the land beyond the grave. So they decorated the walls of their tombs with pictures of the way in which their lives were spent, and hoped perhaps that the mummy, dreaming away its long term of solitary waiting, might take comfort in those shadowy reminiscences. The kings, on the contrary, covered every foot of their last palaces with scenes from the life to come. The wanderings of the soul after its separation from the body, the terrors

and dangers that beset it during its journey through Hades, the demons it must fight, the accusers to whom it must answer, the transformations it must undergo, afforded subjects for endless illustration. Of the fishing and fowling and feasting and junketting that we saw the other day in those terraces behind the Ramesseum, we discover no trace in the tombs of Bab-el-Molook. In place of singing and lute-playing, we find here prayers and invocations; for the pleasant Nile-boat, and the water-parties, and the chase of the gazelle and the ibex, we now have the bark of Charon, and the basin of purgatorial fire, and the strife with the infernal deities. The contrast is sharp and strange. It is as if an Epicurean aristocracy had been ruled by a line of Puritan kings. The tombs of the subjects are Anacreontics. The tombs of their sovereigns are penitential psalms.

To go down into one of these great sepulchres is to descend one's-self into the Lower World, and to tread the path of the shades. Crossing the threshold, we look up half-expecting to read those terrible words in which all who enter are warned to leave hope behind. The passage slopes before our feet; the daylight fades behind us. At the end of the passage comes a flight of steps, and from the bottom of that flight of steps we see another corridor slanting down into depths of utter darkness. The walls on both sides are covered with close-cut columns of hieroglyphic text, interspersed with ominous shapes, half-deity, half-demon. Huge serpents writhe beside us along the walls. Guardian spirits of threatening aspect advance, brandishing swords of flame. A strange heaven opens overhead—a heaven where the stars travel in boats across the seas

of space; and the Sun, escorted by the hours, the months, and the signs of the zodiac, issues from the East, sets in the West, and traverses the hemisphere of Everlasting Night. We go on, and the last gleam of daylight vanishes in the distance. Another flight of steps leads now to a succession of passages and halls, some smaller, some larger, some vaulted, some supported on pillars. Here yawns a great pit half full of débris. Yonder opens a suite of unfinished chambers abandoned by the workmen. The farther we go, the more weird become our surroundings. The walls swarm with ugly and evil things. Serpents, and bats, and crocodiles, some with human heads and legs, some vomiting fire, some armed with spears and darts, pursue and torture the wicked. These unfortunates have their hearts torn out; are boiled in cauldrons; are suspended head downwards over seas of flame; are speared, decapitated, and driven in headless gangs to scenes of further torment. Beheld by the dim and shifting light of a few candles, these painted horrors assume an aspect of ghastly reality. They start into life as we pass, then drop behind us into darkness. That darkness alone is awful. The atmosphere is suffocating. The place is ghostly and peopled with nightmares.

Elsewhere we come upon scenes less painful. The Sun emerges from the lower hemisphere. The justified dead sow and reap in the Elysian fields, gather celestial fruits, and bathe in the waters of truth. The royal mummy reposes in its shrine. Funereal statues of the king are worshipped with incense, and offerings of meat, and libations of wine.* Finally the king arrives,

* These funereal statues are represented each on a stand or platform, erect, with one foot advanced, as if walking, the right hand holding the Tau,

purified and justified, at the last stage of his spiritual journey. He is welcomed by the Gods, ushered into the presence of Osiris, and received into the Abode of the Blest. *

Coming out for a few moments into blinding daylight, we drink a long draught of pure air, cross a few yards of uneven ground, arrive at the mouth of another excavation, and plunge again into underground darkness. A third and a fourth time we repeat this strange experience. It is like a feverish sleep, troubled by gruesome dreams, and broken by momentary wakings.

These tombs in a general way are very much alike. Some are longer than others; ** some loftier. In some the descent is gradual; in others it is steep and sudden.

or symbol of life, the left hand grasping a staff. The attitude is that of the wooden statue at Boulak; and it is worth remark that the figures stand detached, with no support at the back, which was never the case with those carved in stone or granite. There can be no doubt that this curious series of funeral statues represents those which were actually placed in the tomb; and that the ceremonies here represented were actually performed before them, previous to closing the mouth of the sepulchre. One of these very wooden statues, from this very tomb, was brought to England by Belzoni, and is now in the British Museum (No. 854, Central Saloon). The wood is much decayed, and the statue ought undoubtedly to be placed under glass. The tableaux representing the above ceremonies are well copied in Rosellini, *Mon. del Culto*, plates 60-63.

* A remarkable inscription in this tomb, relating the wrath of Ra and the destruction of mankind, is translated by M. Naville in vol. iv. pt. i, of the *Transactions of the Biblical Arch. Society*. In this singular myth, which bears a family resemblance to the Chaldean record of the Flood, the deluge is a deluge of human blood. The inscription covers the walls of a small chamber known as the Chamber of the Cow.

* The longest tomb in the valley, which is that of Seti I., measures 470 feet in length to the point where it is closed by the falling in of the rock; and the total depth of its descent is about 180 feet. The tomb of Rameses III. (No. 11) measures in length 405 feet, and descends only 31 feet. The rest average from about 350 to 150 feet in length, and the shortest is excavated to a distance of only 65 feet.

We visited, however, one tomb in the Assaseef, which in extent far exceeds any of the tombs of the kings. This astonishing excavation, which consists of a bewildering labyrinth of halls, passages, staircases, pits, and chambers, is calculated at 23,809 square feet. The name of the occupant was Petamunap, a priest of uncertain date.

Certain leading features are common to all. The great serpent,* the scarab,** the bat*** and the crocodile,† are always conspicuous on the walls. The judgment-scene, and the well-known typical picture of the four races of mankind, are continually reproduced. Some tombs,†† however, vary both in plan and decoration. That of Rameses III., though not nearly so beautiful as the tomb of Seti I., is perhaps the most curious of all. The paintings here are for the most part designed on an unsculptured surface coated with white stucco. The drawing is often indifferent, and the colouring is uniformly coarse and gaudy. Yellow abounds; and crude reds and blues remind us of the coloured picture-books of our childhood. It is difficult to understand, indeed, how the builder of Medinet Haboo, with the best Egyptian art of the day at his command, should have been content with such wall-paintings as these.

Still Rameses III. seems to have had a grand idea of going in state to the next world, with his retainers around him. In a series of small antechambers opening off from the first corridor, the great officers of the Royal Household—the High Steward, the Treasurer, the Chief Baker, the Superintendents of the Boats, the

* *Apophis*, in Egyptian *Aḥap*; the great serpent of darkness, over whom Ra must triumph after he sets in the west, and before he again rises in the east.

** Kheper, the scarab deity. See Chap. VI. p. 135 of vol. I.

*** Symbolical of darkness.

† The crocodile represents Sebek. In one of the Boulak papyri, this God is called the son of Isis, and combats the enemies of Osiris. Here he combats Apophis in behalf of Ra.

†† The tomb numbered 3 in the first small ravine to the left as one rides up the valley, bears the cartouches of Rameses II. The Writer crawled in as far as the choked condition of the tomb permitted, but the passage becomes quite impassable after the first thirty or forty yards. See chap. XV. p. 49 of this vol.

Armoury, and the Palace-furniture—are supposed to have been buried. Under the floor of each chamber is a pit, now filled up; and the walls are decorated with subjects believed to be descriptive of the office of each functionary. In one, the cooks and bakers are seen preparing the royal dinner. In the others are depicted magnificent thrones; gilded galleys with parti-coloured sails; gold and silver vases; rich store of arms and armour; piles of precious woods, of panther skins, of fruits, and birds, and curious baskets, and all such articles of personal luxury as a palace-building Pharaoh might delight in. Here also are the two famous harpers; cruelly defaced, but still sweeping the strings with the old powerful touch that erewhile soothed the King in hours of melancholy. These two spirited figures—which are undoubtedly portraits*—almost redeem the poverty of the rest of the paintings.

In many tombs, the empty sarcophagus yet occupies its ancient place.** We saw one in No. 2 (Rameses IV.), and another in No. 9 (Rameses VI.); the first, a grand monolith of dark granite overturned and but little injured; the second, shattered by early treasure-seekers.

* When first seen by Sir G. Wilkinson these harpers were still in such good preservation, that he reported of one at least, if not both, as obviously blind. The harps are magnificent, richly inlaid and gilded, and adorned with busts of the king. One has eleven strings, the other fourteen.

** The sarcophagus of Seti I., which was brought to England by Belzoni, is in Sir J. Soane's Museum. It is carved from a single block of the finest alabaster, and is covered with incised hieroglyphic texts and several hundred figures, descriptive of the passage of the sun through the hours of the night. See *Le Sarcophage de Seti I.* P. PIERRET. *Revue Arch.*, vol. XXI. p. 285: 1870.

The sarcophagus of Rameses III. is in the Fitz-William Museum, Cambridge, and the lid thereof is in the Egyptian collection of the Louvre. See *Remarks on the Sarcophagus of Rameses III.* S. BIRCH, LL.D.; Cambridge, 1876. Also *Notice Sommaire des Monuments Égyptiens du Louvre.* E. DE ROUGÉ, p. 51: Paris, 1873.

Most of the tombs at Bab-el-Molook were open in Ptolemaic times. Being then, as now, among the stock sights and wonders of Thebes, they were visited by crowds of early travellers, who have as usual left their neatly-scribbled graffiti on the walls. When and by whom the sepulchres were originally violated is of course unknown. Some, doubtless, were sacked by the Persians; others were plundered by the Egyptians themselves, long enough before Cambyses. Not even in the days of the Ramessides, though a special service of guards was told off for duty in "the Great Valley," were the kings safe in their tombs. During the reign of Rameses IX.—whose own tomb is here, and known as No. 6—there seems to have been an organised band, not only of robbers, but of receivers, who lived by depredations of the kind. A contemporary papyrus* tells how in one instance the royal mummies were found lying in the dust, their gold and silver ornaments, and the treasures of their tombs, all stolen. In another instance, a king and his queen were carried

* Abbott Papyrus, British Museum. This papyrus, which has been translated by M. Chabas (*Mélanges Égyptologiques*, 3ième Série: Paris and Chalon, 1870), gives a list of royal tombs inspected by an Egyptian Commission in the month of Athyr (year unknown), during the reign of Rameses IX. Among the tombs visited on this occasion mention is especially made of "the funeral monument of the king En-Aa, which is at the north of the Amenophium of the terrace. The monument is broken into from the back, at the place where the stela is placed before the monument, and having the statue of the king upon the front of the stela, with his hound, named Bahuka, between his legs. Verified this day, and found intact." Such was the report of the writer of this papyrus of 3000 years ago. Now comes one of the wonders of modern discovery. In 1860, or 1861, M. Mariette, excavating in that part of the Necropolis called the Assaseef, which lies to the north of the ruins of the Amenophium, discovered the remains of the tomb of this very king, and the broken stela bearing upon its face a full-length bas-relief of King En-Aa (or Entef-Aa), with three dogs before him and one between his legs; the dog Bahuka having his name engraved over his back in hieroglyphic characters.—See *Tablet of Antefaa II.* S. BIRCH, LL.D. *Transactions of the Bib. Arch. Society*, vol. IV. part 1. p. 172.

away bodily, to be unrolled and rifled at leisure. This curious information is all recorded in the form of a report, drawn up by the Commandant of Western Thebes, who, with certain other officers and magistrates, officially inspected the tombs of the "Royal Ancestors" during the reign of Rameses IX.

No royal tomb has, I believe, been found absolutely intact in the valley of Bab-el-Molook. Even that of Seti the First had been secretly entered ages before ever Belzoni discovered it. He found in it statues of wood and porcelain, and the mummy of a bull; but nothing of value save the sarcophagus, which was empty. There can be no doubt that the priesthood were largely implicated in these contemporary sacrileges. Of thirty-nine persons accused by name in the papyrus just quoted, seven are priests, and eight are sacred scribes.

To rob the dead was always a lucrative trade at Thebes. The mummy of Queen Aah-Hotep,* discovered a few years since in an unpretending sepulchre at Drah Aboo-l-Neggah, was found loaded with jewels, and weapons, and precious toys in gold and silver. Yet Aah-Hotep was only a queen-consort, and lived in the less ostentatious days of the XVIIth Dynasty. The splendid Pharaohs of 400 years later, we may be certain, went to their dark palaces still more magnificently equipped for the life to come.** When, indeed, one

* These invaluable relics are exhibited in the Salle des Bijoux of the Boulak Museum.

** There is in one of the Papyri of the Louvre a very curious illustration, representing—1st, the funeral procession of one Neb-Set, deceased; 2d, the interior of the sepulchre, with the mummy, the offerings, and the furniture of the tomb, elaborately drawn and coloured. Among the objects here shown are two torches, three vases, a coffer, a mirror, a Kohl bottle, a pair of sandals, a staff, a vase for ointment, a perfume bottle, and an ablution jar. "These ob-

thinks of the jewels, furniture, vases, ointments, clothing, arms, and precious documents which were as certainly buried in those tombs as the royal mummies for whom they were excavated, it seems far more wonderful that one queen and her parure should have remained undiscovered, than that all the rest of these dead and gone royalties should have fallen among thieves.

Of all tombs in the Valley of Bab-el-Molook, one would rather, I think, have discovered that of Ramesses III. As he was one of the richest of the Pharaohs* and an undoubted virtuoso in his tastes, so we may be sure that his tomb was furnished with all kinds of beautiful and precious things. What would we not give now to find some of those elaborate gold and silver vases, those cushioned thrones and sofas, those bows and quivers and shirts of mail so carefully catalogued on the walls of the side chambers in the first corridor! I do not doubt that specimens of all these things were buried with the king and left ready for his use. He died, believing that his soul would come back after long cycles of probation, and make its home once more in the mummied body. He thought

jects, all belonging to the toilette (for the coffer would have contained clothing), were placed in the tomb for that day of waking which the popular belief promised to the dead. The tomb was therefore furnished like the abodes of the living."—Translated from T. DEVERIA, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Egyptiens du Louvre*: Paris, 1875, p. 80. The plan of the sepulchre of Neb-Set is also drawn upon this papyrus; and the soul of the deceased, represented as a human-headed bird, is shown flying down towards the mummy. A fine sarcophagus in the Boulak museum (No. 84) is decorated in like manner, with a representation of the mummy on its bier being visited, or finally rejoined, by the soul. I have also in my own collection a funeral papyrus vignettied on one side with this same subject; and bearing on the reverse side an architectural elevation of the monument erected over the sepulchre of the deceased.

* "King Rhampsinitus (Ramesses III.) was possessed, they said, of great riches in silver, indeed, to such an amount that none of the princes, his successors, surpassed or even equalled his wealth."—HERODOTUS, book II. chap. 121.

he should rise as from sleep; cast off his bandages; eat and be refreshed, and put on sandals and scented vestments, and take his staff in his hand, and go forth again into the light of everlasting day. Poor ghost, wandering bodiless through space! where now are thy funeral-baked meats, thy changes of raiment, thy perfumes and precious ointments? Where is that body for which thou wert once so solicitous, and without which resurrection* is impossible? One fancies thee sighing forlorn through these desolate halls when all is silent and the moon shines down the valley.

Life at Thebes is made up of incongruities. A morning among temples is followed by an afternoon of antiquity-hunting; and a day of meditation among tombs winds up with a dinner-party on board some friend's Dahabeeyah, or a fantasia at the British Consulate. L. and the Writer did their fair share of antiquity-hunting both at Luxor and elsewhere; but chiefly at Luxor. I may say, indeed, that our life here was one long pursuit of the pleasures of the chase. The game, it is true, was prohibited; but we enjoyed it none the less because it was illegal. Perhaps we enjoyed it the more.

There were whispers about this time of a tomb that had been discovered on the Western side—a wonderful tomb, rich in all kinds of treasures. No one, of

* Impossible from the Egyptian point of view. "That the body should not waste or decay was an object of anxious solicitude; and for this purpose various bangles and amulets, prepared with certain magical preparations, and sanctified with certain spells or prayers, or even offerings and small sacrifices, were distributed over various parts of the mummy. In some mysterious manner the immortality of the body was deemed as important as the passage of the soul; and at a later period the growth or natural reparation of the body was invoked as earnestly as the life or passage of the soul to the upper regions."—See *Introduction to the Funereal Ritual*, S. BIRCH, LL.D., in vol. v. of *BUNSEN'S Egypt*: Lond., 1867.

course, had seen these things. No one knew who had found them. No one knew where they were hidden. But there was a solemn secrecy about certain of the Arabs, and a conscious look about some of the visitors, and an air of awakened vigilance about the government officials, which savoured of mystery. These rumours by and by assumed more definite proportions. Dark hints were dropped of a possible papyrus; the M.B.'s babbled of mummies; and an American Dahabeeyah, lying innocently off Karnak, was reported to have a mummy on board. Now, neither L. nor the Writer desired to become the happy proprietor of an ancient Egyptian; but the papyrus was a thing to be thought of. In a fatal hour we expressed a wish to see it. From that moment every mummy-snatcher in the place regarded us as his lawful prey. Beguiled into one den after another, we were shown all the stolen goods in Thebes. Some of the things were very curious and interesting. In one house we were offered two bronze vases, each with a band of delicately-engraved hieroglyphs running round the lip; also a square stand of basket-work in two colours, precisely like that engraved in Sir G. Wilkinson's first volume,* after the original in the Berlin Museum. Pieces of mummy-case and wall-sculpture and sepulchral tablets abounded; and on one occasion we were introduced into the presence of—a mummy!

All these houses were tombs, and in this one the mummy was stowed away in a kind of recess at the end of a long rock-cut passage; probably the very place once occupied by the original tenant. It was a

* *The Ancient Egyptians*, Sir G. Wilkinson; vol. 1. chap. II., woodcut No. 92. Lond., 1871.

mummy of the same period as that which we saw dis-entombed under the auspices of the Governor, and was enclosed in the same kind of cartonnage, patterned in many colours on a white ground. I shall never forget that curious scene—the dark and dusty vault; the Arabs with their lanterns; the mummy in its gaudy cerements lying on an old mat at our feet.

Meanwhile we tried in vain to get sight of the coveted papyrus. A grave Arab dropped in once or twice after nightfall, and talked it over vaguely with the dragoman; but never came to the point. He offered it first, with a mummy, for £100. Finding, however, that we would neither buy his papyrus unseen nor his mummy at any price, he haggled and hesitated for a day or two, evidently trying to play us off against some rival or rivals unknown, and finally disappeared. These rivals, we afterwards found, were the M.B.'s. They bought both mummy and papyrus at an enormous price; and then, unable to endure the perfume of their ancient Egyptian, drowned the dear departed at the end of a week.

Other purchasers are possibly less sensitive. We heard, at all events, of fifteen mummies successfully insinuated through the Alexandrian Custom-house by a single agent that winter. There is, in fact, a growing passion for mummies among Nile travellers. Unfortunately, the prices rise with the demand; and although the mine is practically inexhaustible, a mummy now-a-days becomes not only a prohibited, but a costly luxury.

At Luxor, the British, American, and French Consuls are Arabs. The Prussian Consul is a Copt. The Austrian Consul is, or was, an American. The French

Consul showed us over the old tumble-down building called "The French House," which, though but a rude structure of palm-timbers and sun-dried clay, built partly against and partly over the Temple of Luxor, has its place in history. For here, in 1829, Champollion and Rosellini lived and worked together, during part of their long sojourn at Thebes. Rosellini tells how they used to sit up at night, dividing the fruits of the day's labour; Champollion copying whatever might be useful for his Egyptian grammar, and Rosellini, the new words that furnished material for his dictionary. Here, too, lodged the naval officers sent out by the French in 1831, to remove the obelisk which now stands in the Place de la Concorde. And here, writing those charming letters that delight the world, Lady Duff Gordon lingered through the last few winters of her life. The rooms in which she lived first, and the balcony in which she took such pleasure, are no longer accessible, owing to the ruinous state of one of the staircases; but we saw the rooms she last inhabited. Her couch, her rug, her folding chair are there still. The walls are furnished with a few cheap prints and a pair of tin sconces. All is very bare and comfortless.

We asked if it was just like this when the Sittèh lived here. The Arab Consul replied that she had "a table, and some books." He looked himself in the last stage of consumption, and spoke and moved like one that had done with life.

We were shocked at the dreariness of the place—till we went to the window. That window, which commands the Nile and the Western plain of Thebes furnished the room and made its poverty splendid.

The sun was near setting. We could distinguish the mounds and pylons of Medinet Haboo and the site of the Ramesseum. The terraced cliffs, overtopped by the pyramidal mountain of Bab-el-Molook, burned crimson against a sky of stainless blue. The footpath leading to the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings showed like a hot white scar winding along the face of the rocks. The river gave back the sapphire tones of the sky. I thought I could be well content to spend many a winter in no matter how comfortless a lodging, if only I had that wonderful view, with its infinite beauty of light and colour and space, and its history, and its mystery, always before my windows.

Mehemet Ali gave this house to the French, and to the French it still belongs. It disfigures and encumbers the Temple, and it is going fast to ruin; yet one cannot wish it away.

Another historical house is that built by Sir G. Wilkinson, among the tombs of Sheykh-Abd-el-Koorneh. Here he lived while amassing the materials for his *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*; and here Lepsius and his company of artists put up while at work on the Western bank. Science makes little impression on the native mind. No one now remembers Champollion, or Rosellini, or Sir G. Wilkinson; but every Arab in Luxor cherishes the memory of Lady Duff Gordon in his heart of hearts, and speaks of her with blessings.

The French House lies at the southern end of the Temple. At the northern end, built up between the enormous sandstone columns of the Great Colonnade, is the house of Mustapha Aga, most hospitable and kindly of British Consuls. Mustapha Aga has travelled

in Europe, and speaks fluent Italian, English, and French. His eldest son is Governor of Luxor; his younger—the “little Ahmed” whom Lady Duff Gordon delighted to educate—having spent two years in England as the guest of Lord D., is an accomplished Englishman. We used to see him of a morning looking like a beautiful young Prince just stepped out of the *Arabian Nights*, turbaned and slippered, and robed in a magnificent cream-coloured beneesh of Damascene embroidery. After dinner, he would pay us a visit in faultless evening dress, coming in, hat in hand, with the *élancé* step and the drawing-room smile of the gilded youth of Belgravia.

In the round of gaiety that goes on at Luxor the British Consulate plays the leading part. Mustapha Aga entertains all the English Dahabeeyahs, and all the English Dahabeeyahs entertain Mustapha Aga. We were invited to several Fantasias at the Consulate, and dined with Mustapha Aga at his suburban house the evening before we left Luxor.

The appointed hour was 8.30 P. M. We arrived amid much barking of dogs, and were received by our host in a large empty hall surrounded by a divan. Here we remained till dinner was announced. We were next ushered through an anteroom where two turbaned and barefooted servants were in waiting; the one with a brass basin and ewer, the other with an armful of Turkish towels. We then, each in turn, held our hands over the basin; had water poured on them; and received a towel apiece. These towels we were told to keep; and they served for dinner-napkins. The anteroom opened into a brilliantly-lighted dining-room of moderate size, having in the centre a round brass

table with an upright fluted rim, like a big tray. For each person were placed a chair, a huge block of bread, a wooden spoon, two tumblers, and a bouquet. Plates, knives, forks, there were none.

The party consisted of the Happy Couple, the Director of the Luxor Telegraph Office, L., the Writer, young Ahmed, and our host.

"To-night we are all Arabs," said Mustapha Aga, as he showed us where to sit. "We drink Nile water, and we eat with our fingers."

So we drank Nile water; and for the first time in our lives we ate with our fingers. In fact, we found them exceedingly useful.

The dinner was excellent. Without disrespect to our own accomplished chef, or to the accomplished chefs of our various friends upon the river, I am bound to say that it was the very best dinner I ever ate out of Europe. Everything was hot, quickly served, admirably dressed and the best of its kind. Here is the *menu*.—

MENU. MARCH 31, 1874.

White soup :—(Turkey).

FISH.

Fried Kishr. *

ENTRÉES.

Stewed pigeons.

Spinach and rice.

ROAST.

Dall. **

* *Kishr*; one of the few good fish of the Nile.

** *Dall*: roast shoulder of lamb.

ENTRÉES.

Kebobs* of mutton.
Tomatoes with rice.

Kebobs of lamb's kidneys.
Kuftah.**

ROAST.

Turkey, with cucumber sauce.

ENTRÉE.

Pilaff*** of rice.

SECOND COURSE.

Mish-mish. †
Kunáfah. ††

Rus Blebban. †††
Totleh. §

These dishes were placed one at a time in the middle of the table, and rapidly changed. Each dipped his own spoon in the soup, dived into the stew, and pulled off pieces of fish or lamb with his fingers. Having no plates, we made plates of our bread. Meanwhile Mustapha Aga, like an attentive host, tore off an especially choice morsel now and then, and handed it to one or other of his guests.

To eat gracefully with one's fingers is a fine art; to carve with them skilfully is a science. None of us, I think, will soon forget the wonderful way in which our host attacked and vanquished the turkey—a solid colossus weighing twenty lbs., and roasted to perfection. Half-rising, he turned back his cuff, poised his wrist, and, driving his forefinger and thumb deep into the breast, brought out a long, stringy, smoking fragment, which he deposited on the plate of the Writer.

* *Kebobs*: small lumps of meat grilled on skewers.

** *Kuftah*: broiled mutton.

*** *Pilaff*: boiled rice, mixed with a little butter, and seasoned with salt and pepper.

† *Mish-mish*: apricots (preserved).

†† *Kunáfah*: A rich pudding made of rice, almonds, cream, cinnamon, etc. etc.

††† *Rus Blebban*: rice cream.

§ *Totleh*: sweet jelly, encrusted with blanched almonds.

Thus begun, the turkey went round the table amid peals of laughter, and was punished by each in turn. The pilaff which followed is always the last dish served at an Egyptian or Turkish dinner. After this, our spoons were changed and the sweets were put upon the table. The drinks throughout were plain water, rice-water, and lemonade. Some native musicians played in the anteroom during dinner; and when we rose from table, we washed our hands as before.

We now returned to the large hall, and not being accomplished in the art and mystery of sitting cross-legged, curled ourselves up on the divans as best we could. The Writer was conducted by Mustapha Aga to the corner seat at the upper end of the room, where he said the Princess of Wales had sat when their Royal Highnesses dined with him the year before. We were then served with pipes and coffee. The gentlemen smoked chibouques and cigarettes, while for us there were gorgeous rose-water narghilehs with long flexible tubes and amber mouthpieces. L. had the Princess's pipe, and smoked it very cleverly all the evening.

By and by came the Governor, the Kadee of Luxor, the Prussian Consul and his son, and some three or four grave-looking merchants in rich silk robes and ample turbans. Meanwhile the band—two fiddles, a tambourine and a darrabooka—played at intervals at the lower end of the hall; pipes, coffee, and lemonade went continually round; and the entertainment wound up, as native entertainments always do wind up at Luxor, with a performance of Ghawazee.

We had already seen these dancers at two previous Fantasias, and we admired them no more the third time than the first. They wore baggy Turkish trowsers,

loose gowns of gaudy pattern, and a profusion of jewellery. The *première danseuse* was a fine woman and rather handsome; but in the "belle" of the company, a thick-lipped Nubian, we could discover no charm whatever. The performances of the Ghawazee—which are very ungraceful and almost wholly pantomimic—have been too often described to need description here. Only once, indeed, did we see them perform an actual dance; and then they swam lightly to and fro, clattering their castanets, crossing and re-crossing, and bounding every now and then down the whole length of the room. This dance, we were told, was of unknown antiquity. They sang occasionally; but their voices were harsh and their melodies inharmonious.

There was present, however, one native performer whom we had already heard many times, and of whose skill we never tired. This was the leader of the little band—an old man who played the Kemengeh,* or cocoa-nut fiddle. A more unpromising instrument than the Kemengeh it would be difficult to conceive; yet our old Arab contrived to make it discourse most eloquent music. His solos consisted of plaintive airs and extemporised variations, embroidered with difficult, and sometimes extravagant, cadenzas. He always began sedately, but warmed to his work as he went on; seeming at last to forget everything but his own delight in his own music. At such times one could see that he was weaving some romance in his thoughts, and translating it into sounds. As the strings throbbed under his fingers, the whole man became in-

* The kemengeh is a kind of small two-stringed fiddle, the body of which is made of half a cocoa-nut shell. It has a very long neck, and a long foot that rests upon the ground, like the foot of a violoncello; and it is played with a bow about a yard in length. The strings are of twisted horsehair.

spired: and more than once when, in shower after shower of keen despairing notes, he had described the wildest anguish of passion, I have observed his colour change and his hand tremble.

Although we heard him repeatedly, and engaged him more than once when we had friends to dinner, I am sorry to say that I forget the name of this really great artist. He is, however, celebrated throughout the Thebaid, and is constantly summoned to Erment, Esneh, Kenh, Girgeh and other large towns, to perform at private entertainments.

While at Luxor, we went one Sunday morning to the Coptic Church—a large building at the northern extremity of the village. Church, schools and Bishop's house, are here grouped under one roof and enclosed in a courtyard. For Luxor is the centre of one of the twelve sees into which Coptic Egypt is divided.

The church, which has been rebuilt of late years, is constructed of sun-dried brick, having a small apse towards the East, and at the lower or Western end a screened atrium for the women. The centre aisle is perhaps thirty feet in width; the side-aisles, if aisles they can be called, being thickly planted with stone pillars supporting round arches. These pillars came from Karnak, and were the gift of the Khedive. They have lotus-bud capitals, and measure about fifteen feet high in the shaft. At the upper end of the nave, some eighteen or twenty feet in advance of the apse, there stands a very beautiful screen inlaid in the old Coptic style with cedar, ebony, rosewood, ivory, and mother-of-pearl. This screen is the pride of the church. Through the opening in the centre, one looks straight into the little waggon-roofed apse, which contains a

small table and a suspended lamp, and is as dark as the sanctuary of an Egyptian Temple. The reading-desk, like a rickety office stool, faces the congregation; and just inside the screen stands the Bishop's chair. Upon this plan, which closely resembles the plan of the first cathedral of St. Peter at Rome, most Coptic churches are built. They vary chiefly in the number of apses, some having as many as five. The atrium generally contains a large tank, called the Epiphany tank, into which, in memory of the baptism of our Lord, the men plunge at their festival of El Gheetàs.

Young Todroos, the son of the Prussian Consul, conducted us to the church. We went in at about eleven o'clock and witnessed the end of the service, which had then been going on since daybreak. The atrium was crowded with women and children, and the side-aisles with men of the poorer sort. A few groups of better dressed Copts were gathered near the screen listening to a black-robed deacon, who stood reading at the reading desk with a lighted taper in his left hand. A priest in a white vestment embroidered on the breast and hood with a red Maltese cross, was squatting on his heels at the entrance to the adytum. The Bishop, all in black with a black turban, sat with his back to the congregation.

Every face was turned upon us when we came in. The reader paused. The white-robed priest got up. Even the Bishop looked round. Presently a couple of acolytes, each carrying two cane-bottomed chairs, came bustling down the nave; and, unceremoniously driving away all who were standing near, placed us in a row across the middle of the church. This interruption over, the reading was resumed.

We now observed with some surprise that every word of the lessons as they were read in Coptic was translated, *viva voce*, into Arabic by a youth in a surplice, who stood against the screen facing the congregation. He had no book, but went on fluently enough, following close upon the voice of the reader. This, we were told, was done only during the reading of the lessons, the Gospel, and the Lord's Prayer. The rest of the service is performed without translation;* and, the Coptic being a dead language, is consequently unintelligible to the people.

When the reading of the Gospel was over, the deacon retired. The priest then came forward and made a sign to the school children, who ran up noisily from all parts of the church, and joined with the choristers in a wild kind of chant. It seemed to us that this chant concluded the first part of the service.

The second part closely resembled the celebration of mass. The priest came to the door of the screen; looked at the congregation; folded his hands palm to palm; went up to the threshold of the apse, and began reciting what sounded like a litany. He then uncovered the sacred vessels, which till now had been concealed under two blue cotton handkerchiefs, and, turning, shook the handkerchiefs towards the people. He then consecrated the wine and wafer; elevated the host; and himself partook of the Eucharist in both elements. A little bell was rung during the consecra-

* The very same thing was done on the introduction of Christianity into Egypt. The mass of the Egyptian people then knew no Greek; and, the services of the new church being performed in Greek, it became necessary to explain and translate the Scriptures into the Coptic vernacular, (or "recent Egyptian" as it was then called) just as they are now translated into the vernacular Arabic.

tion and again at the elevation. The people, meanwhile, stood very reverently, with their heads bent; but no one knelt during any part of the service. After this, the officiating priest washed his hands in a brass basin; and the deacon—who was also the schoolmaster—came round the church holding up his scarf, which was heaped full of little cakes of unleavened bread. These he distributed to all present. An acolyte followed with a plate, and collected the offerings of the congregation.

We now thought the service was over; but there remained four wee, crumpled, brown mites of babies to be christened. These small Copts were carried up the church by four acolytes, followed by four anxious fathers. The priest then muttered a short prayer; crossed the babies with water from the basin in which he had washed his hands; drank the water; wiped the basin out with a piece of bread; ate the bread; and dismissed the little newly-made Christians with a hasty blessing.

Finally, the Bishop—who had taken no part in the service, nor even partaken of the Eucharist—came down from his chair, and stood before the altar to bless the congregation. Hereupon all the men and boys ranged themselves in single file and trooped through between the screen and the apse, crowding in at one side and out at the other; each being touched by the Bishop on his cheek, as he went by. If they lagged, the Bishop clapped his hands impatiently, and the schoolmaster drove them through faster. When there were no more to come (the women and little girls, be it observed, coming in for no share of this benediction), the priest took off his vestments and laid them

in a heap on the altar; the deacon distributed a basketful of blessed cakes among the poor of the congregation; and the Bishop walked down the nave, eating a cake and giving a bit here and there to the best dressed Copts as he went along. So ended this interesting and curious service, which I have described thus minutely for the reason that it represents, with probably but little change, the earliest ceremonial of Christian worship in Egypt.*

Before leaving, we asked permission to look at the books from which the service had been read. They were all very old and dilapidated. The New Testament, however, was in better condition than the rest, and was beautifully written upon vellum, in red and black ink. The Coptic, of course, looks like Greek to the eyes of the uninitiated; but some of the illuminated capitals struck us as bearing a marked resemblance to certain of the more familiar hieroglyphic characters.

While we were examining the books, the Bishop sent his servant to invite us to pay him a visit. We accordingly followed the man up an outer flight of wooden steps at one corner of the courtyard, and were shown into a large room built partly over the church. Here we found the Bishop—handsome, plump, dignified, with soft brown eyes, and a slightly grizzled beard—seated cross-legged on a divan, and smoking his

* "The Copts are Christians of the sect called Jacobites, Eutychians, Monophysites, and Monothelites, whose creed was condemned by the Council of Chalcedon in the reign of the Emperor Marcian. They received the appellation of 'Jacobites,' by which they are generally known, from Jacobus Baradaeus, a Syrian, who was a chief propagator of the Eutychian doctrines. . . . The religious orders of the Coptic Church consist of a patriarch, a metropolitan of the Abyssinians, bishops, arch-priests, priests, deacons, and monks. In Abyssinia, Jacobite Christianity is still the prevailing religion." See *The Modern Egyptians*; by E. W. LANE. Supplement 1, p. 531. London; 1860.

chibouque. On a table in the middle of the room stood two or three blue and white bottles of Oriental porcelain. The windows, which were sashless and very large, looked over to Karnak. The sparrows flew in and out as they listed.

The Bishop received us very amiably, and the proceedings opened as usual with pipes and coffee. The conversation that followed consisted chiefly of questions on our part, and of answers on his. We asked the extent of his diocese, and learned that it reached from Assouan on the south to Keneh on the north. The revenue of the see, he said, was wholly derived from endowments in land. He estimated the number of Copts in Luxor at 2000, being two-thirds of the entire population. The church was built and decorated in the time of his predecessor. He had himself been Bishop here for rather more than four years. We then spoke of the service we had just witnessed, and of the books we had seen. I showed him my prayer-book, which he examined with much curiosity. I explained the differences indicated by the black and the rubricated matter, and pointed out the parts that were sung. He was, however, more interested in the outside than in the contents, and tapped the binding once or twice, to see if it was leather or wood. As for the gilt corners and clasp, he undoubtedly took them for solid gold.

The conversation next turned upon Coptic; the Idle Man asking him if he believed it to be the tongue actually spoken by the ancient Egyptians.

To this he replied:—

“Yes, undoubtedly. What else should it be?”

The Idle Man hereupon suggested that it seemed to him, from what he had just seen of the church

books, as if it might be a corrupt form of Byzantine Greek.

The Bishop shook his head.

"The Coptic is a distinct language," he said. "Eight Greek letters were added to the Coptic alphabet upon the introduction of Christianity into Egypt; and since that time many Greek words have been imported into the Coptic vocabulary; but the main body of the tongue is Coptic, purely; and it has no radical affinity whatever with the Greek." *

This was the longest speech we heard him make, and he delivered it with some emphasis.

I then asked him if the Coptic was in all respects a dead language; to which he replied that many Coptic words, such as the names of the months and of certain

* The Bishop was for the most part right. The Coptic *is* the ancient Egyptian language (that is to say, it is late and somewhat corrupt Egyptian) written in Greek characters instead of in hieroglyphs. For the abolition of the ancient writing was, next to the abolition of the images of the Gods, one of the first great objects of the early Church in Egypt. Unable to uproot and destroy the language of a great nation, the Christian Fathers took care so to reclothe it that every trace of the old symbolism should disappear and be forgotten. Already, in the time of Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 211), the hieroglyphic style had become obsolete. The secret of reading the hieroglyphs, however, was not lost till the time of the fall of the Eastern Empire. How the lost key was recovered by Champollion after more than 800 years is told in a quotation from Mariette Bey, in the footnote to vol. i. p. 268, Chap. XII. of this book. Of the relation of Coptic to Egyptian, Champollion says, "La langue égyptienne antique ni différait en rien de la langue appelée vulgairement Copte ou Cophte. . . . Les mots égyptiens écrits en caractères hiéroglyphiques sur les monuments les plus anciens de Thèbes, et en caractères Grecs dans les livres Coptes, ne diffèrent en général que par l'absence de certaines voyelles médiales omises, selon la méthode orientale, dans l'orthographe primitive."—*Grammaire Égyptienne*, p. 18.

The Bishop, though perfectly right in stating that Coptic and Egyptian were one, and that the Coptic was a distinct language having no affinity with the Greek, was, however, entirely wrong in that part of his explanation which related to the alphabet. So far from eight Greek letters having been added to the Coptic alphabet upon the introduction of Christianity into Egypt, there was no such thing as a Coptic alphabet previous to that time. The Coptic alphabet is the Greek alphabet as imposed upon Egypt by the Fathers of the early Greek Church; and that alphabet being found insufficient to convey all the sounds of the Egyptian tongue, eight new characters were borrowed from the demotic to supplement the deficiency,

festivals, were still in daily use. This, however, was not quite what I meant; so I put the question in another form, and asked if he thought any fragments of the tongue yet survived among the peasantry.

He pondered a moment before replying.

"That," he said, "is a question to which it is difficult to give a precise answer, but I think you might yet find, in some of the remoter villages, an old man here and there who would understand it a little."

I thought this a very interesting reply to a very interesting question.

After sitting about half-an-hour we rose and took leave. The Bishop shook hands with us all round, and, but that we protested against it, would have accompanied us to the head of the stairs.

This interview was altogether very pleasant. The Copts are said to be sullen in manner, and so bigoted that even a Moslem is less an object of dislike to them than a Christian of any other denomination. However this may be, we saw nothing of it. We experienced, on the contrary, many acts of civility from the Copts with whom we were brought into communication. No traveller in Egypt should, I think, omit being present at a service in a Coptic church. For a Coptic church is now the only place in which one may hear the last utterances of that far-off race with whose pursuits and pleasures the tomb-paintings make us so familiar. We know that great changes have come over the language since it was spoken by Rameses the Great and written by Pentaour. We know that the Coptic of to-day bears to the Egyptian of the Pharaohs some such resemblance, perhaps, as the English of Macaulay bears to the English of Chaucer. Yet it is at bottom the tongue of old

Egypt, and it is something to hear the last lingering echoes of that ancient speech read by the undoubted descendants of the Egyptian people. In another fifty years or so, the Coptic will in all probability be superseded by the Arabic in the services of this Church; and then the very tradition of its pronunciation will be lost. The Copts themselves, it is said, are fast going over to the dominant faith. Perhaps by the time our own descendants are counting the two thousandth anniversary of the Christian Era, both Copts and Coptic will be extinct in Egypt.

A day or two after this we dropped down to Karnak, where we remained till the end of the week; and on the following Sunday we resumed our downward voyage.

If the universe of literature was unconditioned, and the present book was independent of time and space, I would write another chapter here about Karnak. But Karnak, to be fairly dealt by, would ask, not a chapter, but a volume. So, having already told something of the impression first made upon us by that wilderness of wonders, I will say no more.

CHAPTER XXII.

Abydus and Cairo.

OUR last weeks on the Nile went by like one long, lazy, summer's day. Events now were few. We had out-stayed all our fellow-travellers. Even the faithful Bagstones had long since vanished northwards; and the Philæ was the last Dahabeeyah of the year. Of the great sights of the river, we had only Abydus and Beni Hassan left to see; while for minor excursions, daily walks, and explorations by the way, we had little energy left. For the thermometer was rising higher and the Nile was falling lower every day; and we should have been more than mortal, if we had not felt the languid influences of the glowing Egyptian Spring.

The natives call it spring; but to our northern fancy it is spring, summer, and autumn in one. Of the splendour of the skies, of the lavish bounty of the soil at this season, only those who have lingered late in the land can form any conception. There is a breadth of repose now about the landscape that it has never worn before. The winter green of the palms is fading fast. The harvests are ripening; the pigeons are pairing; the time of the singing of birds is come. There is just enough south wind most days to keep the boat straight, and the sail from flapping. The heat is great; yet it is a heat which, up a certain point, one

can enjoy. The men ply their oars by night; and sleep under their benches, or croon old songs and tell stories among themselves, by day. But for the thin canopy of smoke that hangs over the villages, one would fancy now that those clusters of mud-huts were all deserted. Not a human being is to be seen on the banks when the sun is high. The buffaloes stand up to their necks in the shallows. The donkeys huddle together wherever there is shade. The very dogs have given up barking, and lie asleep under the walls.

The whole face of the country, and even of the Nile, is wonderfully changed since we first passed this way. The land, then newly squared off like a gigantic chess-board and intersected by thousands of little channels, is now one sea of yellowing grain. The river is become a labyrinth of sand-banks, some large, some small; some just beginning to thrust their heads above water; others so long that they divide the river for a mile or more at a stretch. Reïs Hassan spends half his life at the prow, poling for shallows; and when we thread our way down one of these sandy straits, it is for all the world like a bit of the Suez Canal. The banks, too, are twice as steep as they were when we went up. The lentil patches, which then blossomed on the slope next the water's edge, now lie far back on the top of a steep brown ridge, at the foot of which stretches a moist flat planted with water-melons. Each melon-plant is protected from the sun by a tiny gable-roof of palm-thatch.

Meanwhile, the river being low and the banks high, we unfortunates benefit scarcely at all by the faint breezes that now and then ruffle the barley. Day by day the thermometer (which hangs in the coolest

corner of the saloon) creeps up higher and higher, working its way by degrees to above 99° ; but never succeeding in getting up quite to 100° . We, however, living in semi-darkness, with closed jalousies, and wet sails hung round the sides of the Dahabeeyah, and wet towels hung up in our cabins, find 99° quite warm enough to be pleasant. The upper deck is of course well deluged several times a day; but even so, it is difficult to keep the timbers from starting. Meanwhile L. and the Idle Man devote their leisure to killing flies, keeping the towels wet, and sprinkling the floors.

Our progress all this time is of the slowest. The men cannot row by day; and at night the sandbanks so hedge us in with dangers, that the only possible way by which we can make a few miles between sunset and sunrise is by sheer hard punting. Now and then we come to a clear channel, and sometimes we get an hour or two of sweet south breeze; but these flashes of good luck are few and far between.

In such wise, and in such a temperature, we found ourselves becalmed one morning within six miles of Denderah. Not even L. could be induced to take a six-mile donkey-ride that day in the sun. The Writer, however, ordered out her sketching-tent and paid a last visit to the Temple; which, seen amid the ripening splendour of miles of barley, looked gloomier, and grander, and more solitary than ever.

Two or three days later, we came within reach of Abydus. Our proper course would have been to push on to Bellianeh, which is one of the recognised starting-points for Abydus. But an unluckily sandbank barred the way; so we moored instead at Samata, a village about two miles nearer to the southward. Here

our dragoman requisitioned the inhabitants for donkeys. As it happened, the harvest had begun in the neighbourhood and all the beasts of burden were at work, so that it was near midday before we succeeded in getting together the three or four wretched little brutes with which we finally started. Not one of these steeds had ever before carried a rider. We had a frightful time with them. My donkey bolted about every five minutes. L.'s snarled like a camel and showed its teeth like a dog. The Idle Man's, bent on flattening its rider, lay down and rolled at short intervals. In this exciting fashion, we somehow or another accomplished the seven miles that separate Samata from Abydus.

Skirting some palm-groves and crossing the dry bed of a canal, we came out upon a vast plain, level as a lake, islanded here and there with villages, and presenting one undulating surface of bearded corn. This plain—the plain of ancient Thinis—runs parallel with the Nile, like the plain of Thebes, and is bounded to the westward by a range of flat-topped mountains. The distance between the river and the mountains, however, is here much greater than at Thebes, being full six miles; while to north and south the view ends only with the horizon.

Our way lies at first by a bridle-track through the thick of the barley; then falls into the Bellianeh road—a raised causeway embanked some twenty feet above the plain. Along this road, the country folk are coming and going. In the cleared spaces where the maize has been cut, little encampments of straw huts have sprung up. Yonder, steering their way by unseen paths, go strings of camels; their gawky necks and

humped backs undulating above the surface of the corn, like galleys with fantastic prows upon a sea of rippling green. The pigeons fly in great clouds from village to village. The larks are singing and circling madly in the clear depths overhead. The bee-eaters flash like live emeralds across our path. The hoopoes strut by the wayside. At rather more than half-way across the plain, we come into the midst of the harvest. Here the brown reapers, barelegged and naked to the waist, are at work with their sickles, just as they are pictured in the tomb of Ti. The women and children follow, gleaning, at the heels of those who bind the sheaves. The Sheykh in his black robe and scarlet slippers rides to and fro upon his ass, like Boaz among his people. As the sheaves are bound up, the camels carry them homeward. A camel-load is fourteen sheaves; seven to each side of the hump. A little farther, and the oxen, yoked two and two, are ploughing up the stubble. In a day or two, the land will be sown with millet, indigo, or cotton, to be gathered in once more before the coming of the inundation.

Meanwhile, as the plain lengthens behind us and the distance grows less between ourselves and the mountains, we see a line of huge irregular mounds reaching for apparently a couple of miles or more along the foot of the cliffs. From afar off, the mounds look as if crowned by majestic ruins; but as we draw nearer, these outlines resolve themselves into the village of Kharábat at Madfooneh, which stands upon part of the mounds of Abydus. And now we come to the end of the cultivated plain—that strange line of demarcation where the inundation stops and the desert begins. Of actual desert, however, there is here but a narrow

strip, forming a first step, as it were, above the alluvial plain. Next comes the artificial platform, about a quarter of a mile in depth, on which stands the modern village; and next again, towering up sheer and steep, the great wall of limestone precipice. The village is extensive, and the houses, built in a rustic Arabesque, tell of a well-to-do population. Arched gateways ornamented with black, white, and red bricks, windows of turned lattice-work, and pigeon-towers in courses of pots and bricks, give a singular picturesqueness to the place; while the slope down to the desert is covered with shrubberies and palms. Below these hanging gardens, on the edge of the desert, lies the cut corn in piles of sheaves. Here the camels are lying down to be unladen. Yonder the oxen are already treading out the grain, or chopping the straw by means of a curious sledge-like machine set with revolving rows of circular knives.* Meanwhile, fluttering from heap to heap, settling on the sheaves, feeding unmolested in the very midst of the threshing floors, strutting all over the margin of the desert, trailing their wings, ruffling their plumes, cooing, curtsying, kissing, courting, filling the air with sweet sounds and setting the whole lovely idyll to a pastoral symphony of their own composing, are thousands and tens of thousands of pigeons.**

* This machine is called the Nôreg.

** The number of pigeons kept by the Egyptian fellahen is incredible. Mr. Zincke says on this subject that "the number of domestic pigeons in Egypt must be several times as great as the population," and suggests that if the people kept pigs, they would keep less pigeons. But it is not as food chiefly that the pigeons are encouraged. They are bred and let live in such ruinous numbers for the sake of the manure they deposit on the land. M. About has forcibly demonstrated the error of this calculation. He shows that the pigeons do thirty million francs' worth of damage to the crops in excess of any benefit they may confer upon the soil.

Now our path turns aside and we thread our way among the houses, noticing here a sculptured block built into a mud wall—yonder an alabaster sarcophagus broken beside a dried-up well—farther on, a granite column still erect in the midst of a palm-garden. And now, the village being left behind, we find ourselves at the foot of a great hill of newly excavated rubbish, from the top of which we presently look down into a kind of crater, and see the Great Temple of Abydus at our feet.

It was now nearly three o'clock; so, having seen what we could in the time, and having before us a long ride through a strange country, we left again at six. I will not presume to describe the Temples of Abydus—one of which is so ruined as to be almost unintelligible, and the other so singularly planned and so obscure in its general purport, as to be a standing puzzle to archæologists—after a short visit of three hours. Enough if I sketch briefly what I saw but cursorily.

Buried as it is, Abydus,* even under its mounds, is a place of profound historical interest. At a time so remote that it precedes all written record of Egyptian story, there existed a little way to the northward of this site a city called Teni.** We know not to what

* The Arabic name of the modern village, Kharábat at Madfooneh, means literally Arabat the Buried.

** *Teni*, or perhaps more probably *Tini*, called by the Greeks *This* or *Thinis*. It was the capital of the VIIIth Nome. "Quoique nous ayons très-peu de chose à rapporter sur l'histoire de la ville de Teni qui à la basse époque, sous la domination romaine, n'était connue que par ses teinturiers en pourpre, elle doit avoir joui d'une très grande renommée chez les anciens Egyptiens. Encore au temps du XIX^{ème} dynastie les plus hauts fonctionnaires de sang royal étaient distingués par le titre de 'Princes de Teni.'"—*Hist. d'Égypte*. BRUGSCH, vol. I. chap. v. p. 29; Leipzig, 1874. "Des monuments trouvés il y a deux ans, me portent à croire que Thini était située assez loin à l'Est au village actuel de Aoulad-Yahia" *Letter of Professor G. Maspero to the Author*, April 1878.

aboriginal community of prehistoric Egypt this city belonged; but here, presumedly, the men of Kem* built their first Temple, evolved their first notions of art, and groped their way to an alphabet which in its origin was probably a mere picture-writing, like the picture-writing of Mexico. Here, too, was born a man named Mena,** a shadowy figure hovering on the border-land of history and tradition, we know only that he was the first primitive chieftain who took the title of King of Upper and Lower Egypt, and that he went northward and founded Memphis. Not, however, till after some centuries was the seat of government removed to the new city. Teni—the supposed burial-place of Osiris—then lost its political importance; but continued to be for long ages the Holy City of Egypt. I have already suggested in another part of this book,*** when and for what reasons I believe it possible that the traditional relics of the God may have been transferred to Philæ.

In the meanwhile, Abydus had sprung up close to Teni. Abydus, however, though an important city, was

* The ancient name of Egypt was *Kem*, or *Kam*, signifying Black, or the Black Land; in allusion to the colour of the soil.

** "Mena, tel que nous le présente la tradition, est le type le plus complet du monarque égyptien. Il est à la fois constructeur et législateur: il fonde le grand temple de Phtah à Memphis et règle le culte des dieux. Il est guerrier, et conduit les expéditions hors de ses frontières."—*Hist. Ancienne des Peuples de l'Orient*. G. MASPERO. Chap. II. p. 55: Paris 1876.

"N'oublions pas qu'avant Ménès l'Égypte était divisée en petits royaumes indépendants que Ménès réunit le premier sous un sceptre unique. Il n'est pas impossible que des monuments de cette antique période de l'histoire Égyptienne subsistent encore."—*Itinéraire de la Haute Égypte*. A. MARIETTE-BEV. Avant Propos, p. 40. Alexandrie, 1872.

*** Chap. XII., pp. 275-6 of vol. I.

never the capital of Egypt. The seat of power shifted strangely with different dynasties, being established now in the Delta, now at Thebes, now at Elephantine; but having once departed from the site which, by reason of its central position and the unbounded fertility of its neighbourhood, was above all others best fitted to play this great part in the history of the country, it never again returned to the point from which it had started. That point, however, was unquestionably the centre from which the great Egyptian people departed upon its wonderful career. Here was the nursery of its strength. Hence it derived its proud title to an unmixed autochthonous descent. For no greater proof of the native origin of the race can possibly be adduced than the position which their first city occupies upon the map of Egypt. That any tribe of colonists should have made straight for the heart of the country and there have established themselves in the midst of barbarous and probably hostile aborigines, is evidently out of the question. It is, on the other hand, equally clear that if Egypt had been colonised from Asia or Ethiopia, the strangers would in the one case have founded their earliest settlement in the neighbourhood of the Isthmus; or in the other, have halted first among the then well-watered plains of Nubia.* But the Egyptains started from the fertile heart of their own mother country, and began by being great at home.

* See Opening Address of Professor R. Owen. C.B., etc. etc. *Report of Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Orientalists, Ethnological Section*: London 1874. See also a paper on *The Ethnology of Egypt*, by the same, published in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, vol. iv., No. 1, p. 246; Lond., 1874.

Abydus and Teni, planted on the same platform of desert, were probably united at one time by a straggling suburb inhabited by the embalmers and other trades-folk concerned in the business of death and burial. A chain of mounds, excavated only where the Temples are situated, now stands to us for the famous city of Abydus. An ancient crude-brick enclosure and an artificial tumulus mark the site of Teni. The Temples and the tumulus, divided by the now exhausted necropolis, are about as distant from one another as Medinet Haboo and the Ramesseum.

There must have been many older Temples at Abydus than these which we now see, one of which was built by Seti I., and the other by Rameses II. Or possibly, as in so many instances, the more ancient buildings were pulled down and rebuilt. Be this as it may, the Temple of Seti, as regards its sculptured decorations, is one of the most beautiful of Egyptian ruins; and as regards its plan, is one of the most singular. A row of square limestone piers, which must once have supported an architrave, are now all that remains of the façade. Immediately behind these comes a portico of twenty-four columns leading by seven entrances to a hall of thirty-six columns. This hall again opens into seven parallel sanctuaries, behind which lie another hall of columns and a number of small chambers. So much of the building seems to be homogeneous. Adjoining this block, however, and leading from it by doorways at the Southern end of the great hall, come several more halls and chambers connected by corridors, and conducting apparently to more chambers not yet excavated. All these piers, columns, halls, and passages, and all the seven sanctu-

aries,* are most delicately sculptured and brilliantly coloured.

There is so far a family resemblance between Temples of the same style and period, that after a little experience one can generally guess before crossing the threshold of a fresh building, what one is likely to see in the way of sculptures within. But almost every subject in the Temple of Seti at Abydus is new and strange. All the Gods of the Egyptian pantheon seem to have been worshipped here, and to have had each his separate shrine. The walls are covered with paintings of these shrines and their occupants; while before

* M. Mariette, in his great work on the excavations at Abydus, observes that these seven vaulted sanctuaries resemble sarcophagi of the form most commonly in use; namely oblong boxes with vaulted lids. Two sarcophagi of this shape are shown in cut 496 of Sir Gardner Wilkinson's second vol. (see figures 1 and 6) *A Popular account of the Ancient Egyptians*. Vol. II. chap. x. London, 1871. Of the uses and purport of the temple, M. Mariette also says—"What do we know of the *idole mère* that presided at its construction? What was done in it? Is it consecrated to a single divinity, who would be Osiris; or to seven Gods, who would be the Seven Gods of the Seven vaulted chambers; or to the nine divinities enumerated in the lists of deities dispersed in various parts of the temple? . . . One leaves the temple in despair, not at being unable to make out its secret from the inscriptions, but on finding that its secret has been kept for itself alone, and not trusted to the inscriptions."—*Description des Fouilles d'Abydos*. MARIETTE-BEY. Paris: 1869.

"Les sept chambres voûtées du grand temple d'Abydos sont relatifs aux cérémonies que le roi devait y célébrer successivement. Le roi se présentait au côté droit de la porte, parcourait la salle dans tout son pourtour et sortait par le côté gauche. Des statues étaient disposées dans la chambre. Le roi ouvrait la porte ou naos où elles étaient enfermées. Dès que la statue apparaissait à ses yeux il lui offrait l'encens, il enlevait le vêtement qui la couvrait, il lui imposait les mains, il la parfumait, il la recouvrait de son vêtement," etc. etc.—MARIETTE-BEY. *Itinéraire de la Haute Egypte*: Avant Propos, p. 62. Alex., 1872.

There is at the upper end of each of these seven sanctuaries a singular kind of false door, or recess, conceived in a style of ornament more Indian than Egyptian, the cutting being curiously square, deep, and massive, the surface of the relief-work flattened, and the whole evidently intended to produce its effect by depths of shadow in the incised portions rather than by sculptural relief. These recesses, or imitation doors, may have been designed to serve as backgrounds to statues, but are not deep enough for niches. There is a precisely similar recess sculptured on one of the walls of the westernmost chamber in the Temple of Goornah.

each the King is represented performing some act of adoration. A huge blue frog, a greyhound, a double-headed goose, a human-bodied creature with a Nilometer for its head,* and many more than I can now remember, are thus depicted. The royal offerings, too, though incense and necklaces and pectoral ornaments abound, are for the most part of a kind that we have not seen before. In one place the King presents to Isis a column with four capitals, having on the top capital a globe and two asps surmounted by a pair of ostrich feathers.

The centre sanctuary of the seven is dedicated to Khem, who is here, as in the great Temple of Seti at Karnak, the presiding divinity. In this principal sanctuary, which is resplendent with colour and in marvellous preservation, we especially observed a portrait of Rameses II.,** in the act of opening the door of a shrine by means of a golden key formed like a human hand and arm. The lock seems to consist of a number of bolts of unequal length, each of which is pushed back in turn by means of the forefinger of the little hand. This, doubtless, gives a correct representation of the kind of locks in use at that time.

It was in a corridor opening out from the great

* These are all representations of minor Gods commonly figured in the funereal papyri, but very rarely seen in the Temple sculptures. The frog Goddess, for instance, is Hek, and symbolised eternity. She is a very ancient divinity, traces of her being found in monuments of the Vth Dynasty. The goose-headed God is Seb, another very old God. The object called the Nilometer was a religious emblem signifying stability, and probably stands in this connection as only a deified symbol.

** Rameses II. is here shown with the side-lock of youth. This Temple, founded by Seti I., was carried on through the time when Rameses the prince was associated with his father upon the throne. The building is strictly coeval in date and parallel in style with the Temple of Goornah and the Speos of Bayt-el-Wely.

hall in this Temple that M. Mariette discovered that precious sculpture known as the New Tablet of Abydus. In this tableau, Seti I. and Rameses II. are seen, the one offering incense, the other reciting a hymn of praises, to the manes of seventy-six Pharaohs,* beginning with Mena, and ending with Seti himself. To our great disappointment—though one cannot but acquiesce in the necessity for precaution—we found the entrance to this corridor closed and mounded up. A ragged old Arab who haunts the Temple in the character of custode, told us that the tablet could now only be seen by the special permission of Mariette Bey.

We seemed to have been here about half-an-hour, when the guide came to warn us of approaching evening. We had yet the site and the great Tumulus of Teni to see; the tumulus being distant about twenty minutes' ride. The guide shook his head; but we insisted on going. The afternoon had darkened over; and for the first time in many months a gathering canopy of cloud shut out the glory of sunset. We however mounted our donkeys and rode northwards. With better beasts we might perhaps have gained our end; as it was, seeing that it grew darker every mo-

* M. Mariette is of opinion that these seventy-six Pharaohs (represented by their cartouches) were either princes born of families originally from Abydus, or that they were sovereigns who had acquired a special title to veneration at this place on account of monuments or pious foundations presented by them to the holy city. A similar inscription framed apparently on the same principles though not comprising altogether the same kings, was sculptured by Thothmes III. on the wall of a side chamber of the Great Temple at Karnak, and is now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

The great value of the present monument consists in its chronological arrangement. It is also said to be of most beautiful execution, and in perfect preservation. "Comme perfection de gravure, comme conservation, comme étendue, il est peu de monuments qui la dépassent." See *La Nouvelle Table d'Abydos*, par A. MARIETTE BEY: *Revue Arch.*, vol. VII., Nouvelle Série, p. 98. This volume of the Review also contains an engraving in outline of the Tablet.

ment, we presently gave in, and instead of trying to push on farther, contented ourselves with climbing a high mound that commanded the view towards Teni.

The clouds by this time were fast closing round, and waves of shadow were creeping over the plain. To our left rose the near mountain barrier, dusk and lowering; to our right stretched the misty corn-flats; at our feet, all hillocks and open graves, lay the desolate necropolis. Beyond the palms that fringed the edge of the desert—beyond a dark streak that marked the site of Thinis—rose, purple in shadow against the twilight, a steep and solitary hill. This hill, called by the natives Kom-es-Sultan, or the Mound of the King, was the tumulus we so desired to see. Viewed from a distance and by so uncertain a light, it looked exactly like a volcanic cone of perhaps a couple of hundred feet in height. It is however wholly artificial, and consists of a mass of graves heaped one above another in historic strata; each layer, as it were, the record of an era; the whole, a kind of human coral-reef built up from age to age with the ashes of generations.

For some years past, the Egyptian Government has been gradually excavating this extraordinary mound. The lower it is opened, the more ancient are its contents. So steadily retrogressive, indeed, are the interments, that the spade of the digger, it is hoped, must ere long strike tombs of the First Dynasty, and restore to light relics of men who lived in the age of Mena. "According to Plutarch," says M. Mariette,* "wealthy

* See *Itinéraire de la Haute Egypte*: A. MARIETTE BEY: p. 147. Alex. 1872. See also my Paper *On Recent Excavations in the Necropolis of Abydos*, Second Congress of Orientalists, Hamitic Section, Thursday, Sept. 17th, 1874.

Egyptians came from all parts of Egypt to be buried at Abydus, in order that their bones might rest near Osiris. Very probably the tombs of Kom-es-Sultan belong to those personages mentioned by Plutarch. Nor is this the only interest attaching to the mound of Kom-es-Sultan. The famous tomb of Osiris cannot be far distant; and certain indications lead us to think that it is excavated in precisely that foundation of rock which serves as the nucleus of this mound. Thus the persons buried in Kom-es-Sultan lay as near as possible to the divine tomb. The works now in progress at this point have therefore a twofold interest. They may yield tombs yet more and more ancient—tombs even of the First Dynasty; and some day or another they may discover to us the hitherto unknown and hidden entrance to the tomb of the God.*

I bitterly regretted at the time that I could not at least ride to the foot of Kom-es-Sultan; but I think now that I prefer to remember it as I saw it from afar off, clothed with mystery, in the gloom of that dusky evening.

There was a heavy silence in the air, and a melancholy as of the burden of ages. The tumbled hillocks looked like a ghastly sea, and beyond the verge of the desert it was already night. Presently, from among the grave-pits there crept towards us a slowly-moving

* See *Itinéraire de la Haute Égypte*, by A. MARIETTE BEY, p. 148. Alexandria, 1872. The hope here expressed by the learned Conservator of Egyptian Antiquities may sound extravagant to those who have not seen the treasures of the Boulak Museum; but there is in truth no limit to the conservative power of the Egyptian desert. "Where neither moth nor dust doth corrupt," and where even the light of day is excluded, things put away in the darkness of the tomb last literally for ever. The stelæ and the minor articles found in tombs of the IVth Dynasty are as fresh in substance and as bright where coloured, as those of the time of the latest Ptolemies.

cloud. As it drew nearer—soft, filmy, shifting, unreal—it proved to be the dust raised by an immense flock of sheep. On they came, a brown compact mass, their shepherd showing dimly now and then, through openings in the cloud. The last pale gleam from above caught them for a moment ere they melted, ghost-like, into the murky plain. Then we went down ourselves, and threaded the track between the mounds and the valley. Palms and houses loomed vaguely out of the dusk; and a caravan of camels, stalking by with swift and noiseless footfall, looked like shadows projected on a background of mist. As the night deepened, the air became stifling. There were no stars, and we could scarcely see a yard before us. Crawling slowly along the steep causeway, we felt, but could distinguish nothing of, the plain stretching away on either side. Meanwhile the frogs croaked furiously, and our donkeys stumbled at every step. When at length we drew near Samata, it was close upon ten o'clock, and Reïs Hassan had just started with men and torches to meet us.

Next morning early we once again passed Girgeh, with its ruined mosque and still unfallen column; and about noonday moored at a place called Ayserat, where we paid a visit to a native gentleman, one Ahmed Aboo Ratab Aga, to whom we carried letters of introduction. Ratab Aga owns large estates in this province; is great in horse-flesh; and lives in patriarchal fashion surrounded by a numerous clan of kinsfolk and dependents. His residence at Ayserat consists of a cluster of three or four large houses, a score or so of pigeon-towers, an extensive garden, stabling, exercising-ground, and a large courtyard; the whole enclosed by a wall of circuit, and entered by a fine Arabesque

gateway. He received us in a loggia of lattice-work overlooking the courtyard, and had three of his finest horses—a gray, a bay, and a chestnut—brought out for us to admire. They were just such horses as Velasquez loved to paint—thick in the neck, small in the head, solid in the barrel, with wavy manes, and long silky tails set high and standing off straight in true Arab fashion. We doubted, however, that they were altogether *pur sang*. They looked wonderfully picturesque with their gold-embroidered saddlecloths, peaked saddles covered with crimson, green, and blue velvet, long shovel-stirrups and tasselled head-gear. The Aga's brother and nephews put them through their paces. They knelt to be mounted; lay down and died at the word of command; dashed from perfect immobility into a furious gallop; and when at fullest speed, stopped short, flung themselves back upon their haunches, and stood like horses of stone. We were told that our host had a hundred such standing in his stables. Pipes, coffee, and an endless succession of different kinds of sherbets went round all the time our visit lasted; and in the course of conversation, we learned that not only the wages of agricultural labourers, but even part of the taxes to the Khedive, are here paid in corn.

Before leaving, L., the Little Lady, and the Writer were conducted to the Hareem, and introduced to the ladies of the establishment. We found them in a separate building with a separate courtyard, living after the usual dreary way of Eastern women, with apparently no kind of occupation and not even a garden to walk in. The Aga's principal wife (I believe he had but two) was a beautiful woman, with auburn hair, soft

brown eyes, and a lovely complexion. She received us on the threshold, led us into a saloon surrounded by a divan, and with some pride showed us her five children. The eldest was a graceful girl of thirteen; the youngest, a little fellow of four. Mother and daughter were dressed precisely alike in black robes embroidered with silver, pink velvet slippers on bare feet, silver bracelets and anklets, and full pink Turkish trowsers. They wore their hair cut straight across the brow, plaited in long tails behind, and dressed with coins and pendants; while from the back of the head there hung a veil of thin black gauze, also embroidered with silver. Another lady, whom we took for the second wife, and who was extremely plain, had still richer and more massive ornaments, but seemed to hold an inferior position in the Hareem. There were perhaps a dozen women and girls in all, two of whom were black.

One of the little boys had been ill all his short life, and looked as if he could not last many more months. The poor mother implored us to prescribe for him. It was vain to tell her that we knew nothing of the nature of his disease and had no skill to cure it. She still entreated, and would take no refusal; so in pity we sent her some harmless medicines.

We had little opportunity of observing domestic life in Egypt. L. visited some of the vice-regal Hareems at Cairo, and brought away on each occasion the same impression of dreariness. A little embroidery, a few musical toys of Geneva manufacture, a daily drive on the Shoobra road, pipes, cigarettes, sweetmeats, jewellery, and gossip, fill up the aimless days of most Egyptian ladies of rank. There are, however, some who

take an active interest in politics; and in Cairo and Alexandria the opera-boxes of the Khedive and the Great Pashas are nightly occupied by ladies. But it is not by the daily life of the wives of princes and nobles, but by the life of the lesser gentry and upper middle class, that a domestic system should be judged. These ladies of Ayserat had no London-built brougham, no Shoobra road, no opera. They were absolutely without mental resources; and they were even without the means of taking air and exercise. One could see that time hung heavy on their hands, and that they took but a feeble interest in the things around them. The Hareem stairs were dirty; the rooms were untidy; the general aspect of the place was slatternly and neglected. As for the inmates, though all good-nature and gentleness, their faces bore the expression of people who are habitually bored. At Luxor, L. and the Writer paid a visit to the wife of an intelligent and gentlemanly Arab, son of the late governor of that place. This was a middle-class Hareem. The couple were young, and not rich. They occupied a small house which commanded no view and had no garden. Their little courtyard was given up to the poultry; their tiny terrace above was less than twelve feet square; and they were surrounded on all sides by houses. Yet in this stifling prison the young wife lived, apparently contented, from year's end to year's end. She literally never went out. As a child, she had no doubt enjoyed some kind of liberty; but as a marriageable girl, and as a bride, she was as much a prisoner as a bird in a cage. Born and bred in Luxor, she had never seen Karnak; yet Karnak is only two miles distant. We asked her if she would like to go

there with us; but she laughed and shook her head. She was incapable even of curiosity.

It seemed to us that the wives of the Fellaheen were in truth the happiest women in Egypt. They work hard, and are bitterly poor; but they have the free use of their limbs, and they at least know the fresh air, the sunshine, and the open fields.

When we left Ayserat, there still lay 335 miles between us and Cairo. From this time, the navigation of the Nile became every day more difficult. The Dahabeeyah, too, got heated through and through, so that not even sluicing and swabbing availed to keep down the temperature. At night when we went to our sleeping cabins, the timbers alongside of our berths were as hot to the hand as a screen in front of a great fire. Our crew, though to the manner born, suffered even more than ourselves; and L. at this time had generally a case of sunstroke on her hands. One by one, we passed the places we had seen on our way up—Siout, Manfaloot, Gebel Aboo-Fayda, Roda, Minieh. After all, we did not see Beni Hassan. The day we reached that part of the river, a furious sandstorm was raging; such a storm that even the Writer was daunted. Three days later, we took the rail at Bibi and went on to Cairo, leaving the Philæ to follow as fast as wind and weather might permit.

We were so wedded by this time to Dahabeeyah-life, that we felt lost at first in the big rooms at Shepherd's Hotel, and altogether bewildered in the crowded streets. Yet here was Cairo, more picturesque, more beautiful than ever. Here were the same merchants squatting on the same carpets and smoking the same pipes, in the Tunis bazaar; here was the same

old cake-seller still ensconced in the same doorway in the Moskee; here were the same jewellers selling bracelets in the Siāgha; the same money-changers sitting behind their little tables at the corners of the streets; the same veiled ladies riding on donkeys and driving in carriages; the same hurrying funerals, and noisy weddings; the same odd cries, and motley costumes, and unaccustomed trades. Nothing was changed. We soon dropped back into the old life of sight-seeing and shopping—buying rugs and silks, and silver ornaments, and old embroideries, and Turkish slippers, and all sorts of antique and pretty trifles; going from Mohammedan mosques to rare old Coptic churches; dropping in for an hour or two most afternoons at the Boulak Museum; and generally ending the day's work with a drive on the Shoobra road, or a stroll round the Esbekeeyah Gardens.

The Moolid-en-Nabee, or Festival of the Birth of the Prophet, was being held at this time in a tract of waste ground on the road to Old Cairo. Here, in some twenty or thirty large open tents ranged in a circle, there were readings of the Koran and meetings of dervishes going on by day and night, without intermission, for nearly a fortnight. After dark, when the tents were all ablaze with lighted chandeliers, and the dervishes were howling and leaping, and fireworks were being let off from an illuminated platform in the middle of the area, the scene was extraordinary. All Cairo used to be there, on foot or in carriages, between eight o'clock and midnight every evening; the veiled ladies of the Khedive's Harem in their miniature broughams being foremost among the spectators.

The Moolid-en-Nabee ends with the performance of

the Dóseh, when the Sheykh of the Saådeeyeh Dervishes rides over a road of prostrate fanatics. L. and the Writer witnessed this sight from the tent of the Governor of Cairo. Drunk with opium, fasting, and praying, rolling their heads, and foaming at the mouth, some hundreds of wretched creatures lay down in the road packed as close as paving stones, and were walked and ridden over before our eyes. The standard-bearers came first; then a priest reading the Koran aloud; then the Sheykh on his white Arab, supported on either side by bare-footed priests. The beautiful horse trod with evident reluctance, and as lightly and swiftly as possible, on the human causeway under his hoofs. The Moham-medans aver that no one is injured, or even bruised, on this holy occasion;* but I saw some men carried away in convulsions, who looked as if they would never walk again.

It is difficult to say but a few inadequate words of a place about which an instructive volume might be written; yet to pass over the Boulak Museum in silence is impossible. This collection is entirely due to the liberality of the Khedive and the devotion of M. Mariette. With the exception of Mehemet Ali, who excavated the Temple of Denderah, no former Viceroy of Egypt has ever interested himself in the archæology of the country. Those who cared for such rubbish as

* "It is said that these persons, as well as the Sheykh, make use of certain words (that is, repeat prayers and invocations) on the day preceding this performance, to enable them to endure without injury the tread of the horse; and that some not thus prepared, having ventured to lie down to be ridden over, have, on more than one occasion, been either killed or severely injured. The performance is considered as a miracle vouchsafed through supernatural power, and which has been granted to every successive Sheykh of the Saådeeyeh." See Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, chap. xxiv., p. 453. London, 1860.

encumbered the soil or lay hidden beneath the sands of the desert, were free to take it; and no favour was more frequently asked, or more readily granted, than permission to dig for "antichi." Hence the Egyptian wealth of our museums. Hence the numerous private collections dispersed throughout Europe. Ismail Pasha, however, has put an end to this wholesale pillage. Now, for the first time since ever "mummy was sold for balsam," or for bric-à-brac, it is illegal to export antiquities. Now, for the first time, Egypt has her own collection; while in M. Mariette—formerly an assistant-keeper in the Oriental department of the Louvre—the Khedive, with his accustomed tact, has found the best possible Director of the Service of Conservation of National Antiquities.

Traversing these rooms so rich in treasures, one can scarcely believe that the Boulak Museum had no existence thirteen years ago, or that nearly all these wonders have been discovered since that time. Yet such are the facts. Save a small collection purchased from a late Consul General of Austria, every object here exhibited is the result of recent excavations undertaken by M. Mariette at the cost of the Khedive.

Youngest of great museums, the Boulak collection is the richest in the world in portrait-statues of private individuals, in funereal tablets, in amulets, and in personal relics of the ancient inhabitants of the Nile Valley. It is necessarily wanting in such colossal statues as fill the great ground-floor galleries of the British Museum and the Louvre. These, being above ground and few in number, were seized upon long since and transported to Europe. The Boulak statues are the product of the tombs. The famous wooden "Sheykh"

about which so much has been written,* the magnificent diorite statue of Shafra (Chephren), the builder of the Second Pyramid, the two marvellous sitting statues of Prince Ra-hotep and Princess Nefer-t, are all portraits; and, like their tombs, were executed during the lifetime of the persons represented. Crossing the threshold of the Great Vestibule,** one is surrounded by a host of these extraordinary figures, erect; coloured; clothed; all but in motion. It is like entering the crowded anteroom of a royal palace in the time of the Ancient Empire.

The greater number of the Boulak portrait-statues are sculptured in what is called the hieratic attitude; that is, with the left arm down and pressed close to the body, the left hand holding a roll of papyrus, the right leg advanced, and the right hand raised, as grasping the walking staff. It occurred to me that there might be a deeper significance than at first sight appears in this conventional attitude, and that it perhaps suggests the moment of resurrection, when the deceased, holding fast by his copy of the Book of the Dead, walks forth from his tomb into the light of life eternal.

Of all the statues here—one may say, indeed, of all known Egyptian statues—those of Prince Ra-hotep and Princess Nefer-t are the most wonderful. They are the oldest statues in the world.*** They come from a

* See *Egypt of the Pharaohs and the Khedive*, J. B. KINCKE, chap. ix. p. 72. Lond. 1873. Also *La Sculpture Egyptienne*, par E. SODI, p. 57. Paris: 1876. Also *The Ethnology of Egypt*, by PROFESSOR OWEN, C.B., *Journal of Anthropological Institute*, vol. IV., 1784, p. 227. The name of this personage was Ra-em-ka.

** It is in the Great Vestibule that we find the statue of Ti. See chap. IV. p. 92 of vol. I.

*** There is no evidence to show that the statues of Seps and Nesa in the Louvre are older than the IVth Dynasty.

tomb of the Third Dynasty, and are contemporary with Snefru,* a king who reigned before the time of Cheops and Chephren. That is to say, these people who sit before us side by side, coloured to the life, fresh and glowing as the day when they gave the artist his last sitting, lived at a time when the great pyramids of Gheezeh were not yet built, and at a date which is variously calculated at from about 6300 to 4000 years before the present day. The Princess wears her hair precisely at it is still worn in Nubia, and her necklace of cabochon drops is of a pattern much favoured by the modern Ghawazee. The eyes of both statues are inserted. The eyeball, which is set in an eyelid of bronze, is made of opaque white quartz, with an iris of rock-crystal enclosing a pupil of some kind of brilliant metal. This treatment—of which there are one or two other instances extant—gives to the eyes a look of intelligence that is almost appalling. There is a play of light within the orb, and apparently a living moisture upon the surface, which has never been approached by the most skilfully made glass eyes of modern manufacture.**

* Snefru is believed to be the builder of the pyramid of Meydooom, which has never yet been opened, and which probably contains his mummy.

** "Enfin nous signalerons l'importance des statues de Meydooom au point de vue ethnographique. Si la race Egyptienne était à cette époque celle dont les deux statues nous offrent le type, il faut convenir qu'elle ne ressemblait en rien à la race qui habitait le nord de l'Egypte quelques années seulement après Snefru."—*Cat. du Musée de Boulaq*. A. MARIETTE-BEV. P. 277; Paris, 1872.

Of the heads of these two statues Professor Owen remarks that "the brain-case of the male is a full oval, the parietal bosses feebly indicated; in vertical contour the fronto-parietal part is little elevated, rather flattened than convex; the frontal sinuses are slightly indicated; the forehead is fairly developed but not prominent. The lips are fuller than in the majority of Europeans; but the mouth is not prognathic. . . . The features of the female conform in type to those of the male, but show more delicacy and finish. . . . The statue of the female is coloured of a lighter tint than that of the male, indicating the effects

Of the jewels of Queen Aah-hotep, of the superb series of engraved scarabæi, of the rings, amulets, and toilette ornaments, of the vases in bronze, silver, alabaster, and porcelain, of the libation-tables, the woven stuffs, the terra-cottas, the artists' models, the lamps, the silver boats, the weapons, the papyri, the thousand-and-one curious personal relics and articles of domestic use which are brought together within these walls, I have no space to tell. Except the collection of Pompeian relics in Naples, there is nothing elsewhere to compare with the collection at Boulak; and the villas of Pompeii have yielded no such gems and jewels as the tombs of ancient Egypt. It is not too much to say that if these dead and mummied people could come back to earth, the priest would here find all the Gods of his Pantheon; the king his sceptre; the queen her crown-jewels; the scribe his palette; the soldier his arms; the workman his tools; the barber his razors; the husbandman his hoe; the housewife her broom; the child his toys; the beauty her combs and kohl bottles and mirrors. The furniture of the house is here, as well as the furniture of the tomb. Here, too, is the broken sistrum buried with the dead in token of the grief of the living.

Waiting the construction of a suitable edifice, the present building gives temporary shelter to the collection. In the meanwhile, if there was nothing else to

of better clothing and less exposure to the sun. And here it may be remarked that the racial character of complexion is significantly manifested by such evidences of the degree of tint due to individual exposure. . . . The primitive race-tint of the Egyptians is perhaps more truly indicated by the colour of the princess in these painted portrait-statues than by that of her more scantily clad husband or male relative."—*The Ethnology of Egypt*, by PROFESSOR OWEN, C.B. *Journal of Anthropological Institute*, vol. IV., Lond., 1874; p. 225 *et seq.*

tempt the traveller to Cairo, the Boulak Museum would alone be worth the journey.

The first excursion one makes on returning to Cairo, the last one makes before leaving, is to Gheezeh. It is impossible to get tired of the Pyramids. Here L. and the Writer spent their last day with the Happy Couple.

We left Cairo early, and met all the market-folk coming in from the country—donkeys and carts laden with green stuff, and veiled women with towers of baskets on their heads. The Khedive's new palace was swarming already with masons, and files of camels were bringing limestone blocks for the builders. Next comes the open corn-plain, part yellow, part green—the long straight road bordered with acacias—beyond all, the desert-platform, and the Pyramids, half in light, half in greenish-gray shadow, against the horizon. I never could understand why it is that the Second Pyramid, though it is smaller and farther off, looks from this point of view bigger than the First. Farther on, the brown Fellaheen, knee-deep in purple blossom, are cutting the clover. The camels carry it away. The goats and buffaloes feed in the clearings. Then comes the half-way tomb nestled in greenery, where men and horses stay to drink; and soon we are skirting a great backwater that reflects the pyramids like a mirror. Villages, shadoofs, herds and flocks, tracts of palms, corn-flats, and spaces of rich, dark fallow, now succeed each other; and then once more comes the sandy slope, and the cavernous ridge of ancient yellow rock, and the Great Pyramid with its shadow-side towards us, darkening the light of day.

Neither L. nor the Writer ever went inside the

Great Pyramid. The Idle Man did so this day, and L.'s maid on another occasion; and both reported of the place as so stifling within, so foul underfoot, and so fatiguing, that, somehow, we each time put it off, and ended by missing it. The ascent is extremely easy. Rugged and huge as are the blocks, there is scarcely one upon which it is not possible to find a half-way rest for the toe of one's boot, so as to divide the distance. With the help of three Arabs, nothing can well be less fatiguing. As for the men, they are helpful and courteous, and as clever as possible; and coax one on from block to block in all the languages of Europe.

"Pazienza, Signora! Allez doucement—all serene! We half-way now—den halben Weg, Fräulein. Ne vous pressez-pas, Mademoiselle. Chi va sano, va lontano. Six step more, and ecco la cima!"

"You should add the other half of the proverb, amici," said I. "Chi va forte, va alla morte."

My Arabs had never heard this before, and were delighted with it. They repeated it again and again, and committed it to memory with great satisfaction. I asked them why they did not cut steps in the blocks, so as to make the ascent easier for ladies. The answer was ready and honest.

"No, no, Mademoiselle! Arab very stupid to do that. If Arab makes good steps, Howadji goes up alone. No more want Arab man to help him up, and Arab man earn no more dollars!"

They offered to sing "Yankee Doodle" when we reached the top; then, finding we were English, shouted "God save the Queen!" and told us that the Prince of Wales had given £40 to the Pyramid Arabs when he

came here with the Princess two years before; which, however, we took the liberty to doubt.

The space on the top of the Great Pyramid is said to be 30 feet square. It is not, as I had expected, a level platform. Some blocks of the next tier remain, and two or three of the tier next above that; so making pleasant seats and shady corners. What struck us most on reaching the top, was the startling nearness, to all appearance, of the Second Pyramid. It seemed to rise up beside us like a mountain; yet so close, that I fancied I could almost touch it by putting out my hand. Every detail of the surface, every crack and parti-coloured stain in the shining stucco that yet clings about the apex, was distinctly visible.

The view from this place is immense. The country is so flat, the atmosphere so clear, the standpoint so isolated, that one really sees more and sees farther than from many a mountain summit of ten or twelve thousand feet. The ground lies, as it were, immediately under one; and the great Necropolis is seen as in a ground-plan. The effect must, I imagine, be exactly like the effect of a landscape seen from a balloon. Without ascending the Pyramid, it is certainly not possible to form a clear notion of the way in which this great burial-field is laid out. We see from here how each royal pyramid is surrounded by its quadrangle of lesser tombs, some in the form of small pyramids, others partly rock-cut, partly built of massive slabs, like the roofing-stones of the Temples. We see how Cheops and Chephren and Mycerinus lay, each under his mountain of stone, with his family and his nobles around him. We see the great causeways which moved Herodotus to such wonder, and along which the giant

stones were brought. Recognising how clearly the place is a great cemetery, one marvels at the ingenious theories that turn the pyramids into astronomical observatories, and abstruse standards of measurement. They are the grandest graves* in all the world—and they are nothing more.

A little way to the Southward, from the midst of a sandy hollow, rises the head of the Sphinx. Older than the Pyramids themselves, older perhaps than even the Pyramid of Ouenephes at Sakkarah, the monster lies couchant like a watchdog, looking ever to the East, as if for some dawn that has not yet risen.** A depression in the sand close by marks the site of that strange monument miscalled the Temple of the Sphinx.*** Farther away to the west, on the highest

* The word *pyramid*, for which so many derivations have been suggested, is shown in the Geometrical Papyrus of the British Museum to be distinctly Egyptian, and is written *Per-em-us*.

** "On sait par une stèle du musée de Boulaq, que le grand Sphinx est antérieur au Roi Chéops de la IV^e Dynastie." *Dict. d'Arch. Egyptienne*: Article *Sphinx*. P. PIERRET. Paris 1875.

A long disputed question as to the meaning of the Sphinx has of late been finally solved. The Sphinx is shown by M. J. de Rougé, according to an inscription at Edfoo, to represent a transformation of Horus, who in order to vanquish Set (Typhon) took the shape of a human-headed lion. It was under this form that Horus was adored in the Nome Leontopolites. In the above-mentioned Stela of Boulak, known as the stone of Cheops, the Great Sphinx is especially designated as the Sphinx of Hor-em-Khou, or Horus-of-the-Horizon. This is evidently in reference to the orientation of the figure. It has often been asked why the Sphinx is turned to the East. I presume the answer would be, Because Horus, avenger of Osiris, looks to the East, awaiting the return of his father from the lower world. As Horus was supposed to have reigned over Egypt, every Pharaoh took the title of Living Horus, Golden Hawk, etc. etc. Hence the features of the reigning King were always given to the Sphinx form when architecturally employed, as at Karnak, Wady Sabooah, Tanis, etc. etc.

*** It is certainly not a Temple. It may be a mastaba, or votive chapel. It looks most like a tomb. It is entirely built of plain and highly-polished monoliths of alabaster and red granite, laid square and simply, like a sort of costly and magnificent Stonehenge; and it consists of a forecourt, a hall of pillars, three principal chambers, and a well. The chambers contain horizontal niches which it is difficult to suppose could have been intended for anything but the reception of mummies; and at the bottom of the well were found three statues of King Sbafrā (Chephren); one of which is the famous diorite portrait-statue

slope of this part of the desert platform, stands the Pyramid of Mycerinus. It has lost but five feet of its original height, and from this distance it looks quite perfect.

Such—set in a waste of desert—are the main objects, and the nearest objects, on which our eyes first rest. As a whole, the view is more long than wide, being bounded to the Westward by the Libyan range, and to the Eastward by the Mokattam hills. At the foot of those yellow hills, divided from us by the cultivated plain across which we have just driven, lies Cairo, all glittering domes half seen through a sunlit haze. Overlooking the fairy city stands the Mosque of the Citadel, its mast-like minarets piercing the clearer atmosphere. Far to the Northward, traversing reach after reach of shadowy palm-groves, the eye loses itself in the dim and fertile distances of the Delta. To the West and South, all is desert. It begins here at our feet—a rolling wilderness of valleys, and slopes, and rivers, and seas of sand, broken here and there by abrupt ridges of rock, and mounds of ruined masonry, and open graves. A silver line skirts the edge of this dead world, and vanishes Southward in the sun-mist that shimmers on the farthest horizon. To the left of that silver line we see the quarried cliffs of Toora, marble-white; opposite Toora, the plummy palms of Memphis; on the desert platform above, clear though faint, the Pyramids of Abooseer, and Sakkarah, and Dashoor. Every stage of the

of the Boulak Museum. In an interesting article contributed to the *Revue Archéol.* (Vol. xxvi. Paris: 1873), M. du Barry-Merval has shown, as it seems, quite clearly, that the Temple of the Sphinx is in fact the votive chapel of Chephren, and a dependency of the Second Pyramid. It is possible that the niches may have been designed for his Queen and family.

Pyramid of Ouenephes, banded in light and shade, is plain to see. So is the dome-like summit of the great Pyramid of Dashoor. Even the brick ruin beside it, which we took for a black rock as we went up the river, and which looks like a black rock still, is perfectly visible. Farthest of them all, showing pale and sharp amid the palpitating blaze of noon, stands, like an unfinished tower of Babel, the Pyramid of Meydoom. It is in this direction that our eyes turn oftenest—to the measureless desert in its mystery of light and silence; to the Nile where it gleams out again and again, till it melts at last into that faint far distance beyond which lie Thebes, and Philæ, and Aboo Simbel.

APPENDIX No. I.

A. M'CALLUM, Esq., to the EDITOR of the 'TIMES.'*

SIR—It may interest your readers to learn that at the south side of the great Temple of Aboo Simbel, I found the entrance to a painted chamber, rock-cut, and measuring 21 ft. 2½ in., by 14 ft. 8 in., and 12 ft. high to the spring of the arch, elaborately sculptured and painted in the best style of the best period of Egyptian art, bearing the portraits of Rameses the Great and his cartouches, and in a state of the highest preservation. This chamber is preceded by the ruins of a vaulted atrium, in sun-dried brick-work, and adjoins the remains of what would appear to be a massive wall or pylon, which contains a staircase terminating in an arched doorway leading to the vaulted atrium before mentioned.

The doorway of the painted chamber, the staircase, and the arch, were all buried in sand and débris. The chamber appears to have been covered and lost sight of since a very early period, being wholly free from mutilation, and from the scribbling of travellers ancient and modern.

The staircase was not opened until the 18th, and the bones of a woman and child, with two small cinerary urns, were there discovered by a gentleman of our party, buried in the sand. This was doubtless a subsequent interment. Whether this painted chamber is the inner sanctuary of a small Temple, or part of a tomb, or only a speos, like the well-known grottoes at Ibrim, is a question for future excavators to determine.—I have the honour to be, Sir, yours, etc. etc.

ANDREW M'CALLUM.

KOROSKO, NURIA, *Feb. 16th, 1874.*

* This letter appeared in the 'Times' of March 18th, 1874.

APPENDIX II.

THE EGYPTIAN PANTHEON.

“The deities of ancient Egypt consist of celestial, terrestrial, and infernal gods, and of many inferior personages, either representatives of the greater gods or else attendants upon them. Most of the gods were connected with the Sun, and represented that luminary in its passage through the upper hemisphere or Heaven and the lower hemisphere or Hades. To the deities of the Solar cycle belonged the great gods of Thebes and Heliopolis. In the local worship of Egypt the deities were arranged in local triads: thus, at Memphis, Ptah, his wife Merienptah, and their son Nefer Atum, formed a triad, to which was sometimes added the goddess Bast or Bubastis. At Abydos the local triad was Osiris, Isis, and Horus, with Nephthys; at Thebes, Amen Ra or Ammon, Mut, and Chons, with Neith, at Elephantine, Kneph, Anuka, Sati, and Hak. In most instances the names of the gods are Egyptian; thus, Ptah meant ‘the opener;’ Amen, ‘the concealed;’ Ra, ‘the sun’ or ‘day;’ Athor, ‘the house of Horus;’ but some few, especially of later times, were introduced from Semitic sources, as Bal or Baal, Astaruta or Astarte, Khen or Kiun, Respu or Reseph. Besides the principal gods, several inferior or parhedral gods, sometimes personifications of the faculties, senses, and other objects, are introduced into the religious system, and genii, spirits, or personified souls of deities formed part of the same. At a period subsequent to their first introduction the gods were divided into three orders. The first or highest comprised eight deities, who were different in the Memphian and Theban systems. They were supposed to have reigned over Egypt before the time of mortals. The eight gods of the first order at Memphis were—1. Ptah; 2. Shu; 3. Tefnu; 4. Seb; 5. Nut; 6. Osiris; 7. Isis and Horus; 8. Athor. Those of Thebes were—1. Amen-Ra; 2. Mentu; 3. Atum; 4. Shu and Tefnu; 5. Seb, 6. Osiris; 7. Set and Nephthys; 8. Horus and Athor. The gods of the second order were twelve in number, but the name of one only, an Egyptian Hercules, has been preserved. The third order is stated to have comprised Osiris, who, it will be seen, belonged to the first order.”—*Guide to the First and Second Egyptian Rooms; Brit. Musæ.* S. BIRCH, 1874.

The Gods most commonly represented upon the monuments are Phthah, Kneph, Ra, Ammon-Ra, Khem, Osiris, Nefer Atum or Tum, Thoth, Seb', Set, Khons, Horus, Mant, Neith, Isis, Nut, Hathor, and Pasht or Bast. They are distinguished by the following attributes:—

Phthah, or *Ptah*:—In form a mummy, holding the emblem called by some the Nilometer, by others the emblem of Stability. Called "the Father of the Beginning, the Creator of the Egg of the Sun and Moon." Chief Deity of Memphis.

Kneph, *Knoum*, or *Knouphis*:—Ram-headed. Called the Maker of Gods and men; the Soul of the Gods. Chief Deity of Elephantine and the Cataracts.

Ra:—Hawk-headed, and crowned with the sun-disk encircled by an asp. The divine disposer and organiser of the world. Adored throughout Egypt.

Amen-Ra:—Of human form, crowned with a flat-topped cap and two long straight plumes; clothed in the schenti; his flesh sometimes painted blue. There are various forms of this god (see Footnote, p. 120 of this vol.), but he is most generally described as King of the Gods. Chief Deity of Thebes.

Khem:—Of human form mummified; wears head-dress of Amen Ra; his right hand uplifted, holding the flail. The God of productiveness and generation. Chief Deity of Khemmis, or Ekhmeem.

Osiris:—Of human form, mummified, crowned with a mitre, and holding the flail and crook. Called the Good; the Lord above all; the One Lord. Was the God of the lower world; Judge of the dead; and representative of the Sun below the horizon. Adored throughout Egypt. Local Deity of Abydos.

Nefer Atum:—Human-headed, and crowned with the pschent. This God represented the nocturnal sun, or the sun lighting the lower world. Local Deity of Heliopolis.

Thoth:—In form a man, ibis-headed, generally depicted with the pen and palette of a scribe. Was the God of the moon, and of letters. Local Deity of Sesoon, or Hermopolis.

Seb:—The "Father of the Gods," and deity of terrestrial vegetation. In form a man with a goose upon his head.

Set:—Represented by a symbolic animal, with a muzzle and ears like a jackal, the body of an ass, and an upright tail, like the tail of a lion. Was originally a warlike God, and became in later times the symbol of evil and the enemy of Osiris.

Khons:—Hawk-headed, crowned with the sun-disk and horns,

Is sometimes represented as a youth with the side-lock, standing on a crocodile.

Horus:—Horus appears variously as Horus, Horus Aroëris, and Horus Harpakhrat (Harpocrates), or Horus the child. Is represented under the first two forms as a man, hawk-headed, wearing the double crown of Egypt; in the latter as a child with the side-lock. Local Deity of Edfoo (Apollinopolis Magna).

Maut:—A woman draped, and crowned with the pschent; generally with a cap below the pschent representing a vulture. Adored at Thebes.

Neith:—A woman draped, holding sometimes a bow and arrows, crowned with the crown of Lower Egypt. She presided over war, and the loom. Worshipped at Thebes.

Isis:—A woman crowned with the sun-disk surmounted by a throne, and sometimes enclosed between horns. Adored at Abydos. Her soul resided in Sothis, or the Dog-star.

Nut:—A woman curved so as to touch the ground with her fingers. She represents the vault of heaven, and is the mother of the Gods.

Hathor:—Cow-headed, and crowned with the disk and plumes. Deity of Amenti, or the Egyptian Hades. Worshipped at Denderah.

Pasht:—Pasht and Bast appear to be two forms of the same Goddess. As Bast she is represented as a woman, lion-headed, with the disk and uræus; as Pasht, she is cat-headed, and holds a sistrum. Adored at Bubastis.

APPENDIX III.

THE RELIGIOUS BELIEF OF THE EGYPTIANS.

Did the Egyptians believe in one Eternal God, whose attributes were merely symbolised by their numerous deities; or must the whole structure of their faith be resolved into a solar myth, with its various and inevitable ramifications? This is the great problem of Egyptology, and it is a problem that has not yet been solved. Egyptologists differ so widely on the subject that it is impossible to reconcile their opinions. As not even the description of a temple is complete without some reference to this important question, and as the question itself underlies every notion we may form of ancient

Egypt and ancient Egyptians, I have thought it well to group here a few representative extracts from the works of three or four of the greatest authorities upon the subject.

"The religion of the Egyptians consisted of an extended polytheism represented by a series of local groups. The idea of a single deity self-existing or produced was involved in the conception of some of the principal gods, who are said to have given birth to or produced gods, men, all beings and things. Other deities were considered to be self-produced. The Sun was the older object of worship, and in his various forms, as the rising, midday, and setting Sun, was adored under different names, and was often united, especially at Thebes, to the types of other deities, as Amen and Mentu. The oldest of all the local deities, Ptah, who was worshipped at Memphis, was a demiurgos or creator of heaven, earth, gods and men, and not identified with the Sun. Besides the worship of the solar gods, that of Osiris extensively prevailed, and with it the antagonism of Set, the Egyptian devil, the metempsychosis or transmigration of the soul, the future judgment, the purgatory or Hades, the *Karnder*, the *Aahlu* or Elysium, and final union of the soul to the body after the lapse of several centuries. Besides the deities of Heaven, the light, and the lower world, others personified the elements or presided over the operations of nature, the seasons, and events."—*Guide to the First and Second Egyptian Rooms: Brit. Mus.* S. BIRCH, 1874.

"This religion, obscured as it is by a complex mythology, has lent itself to many interpretations of a contradictory nature, none of which have been unanimously adopted. But that which is beyond doubt, and which shines forth from the texts for the whole world's acceptance, is the belief in one God. The polytheism of the monuments is but an outward show. The innumerable Gods of the Pantheon are but manifestations of the One Being in his various capacities. That taste for allegory which created the hieroglyphic writing, found vent likewise in the expression of the religious idea; that idea being, as it were, stifled in the later periods by a too-abundant symbolism."—P. PIERRET, *Dictionnaire d'Arch. Egyptienne*, 1875. Translated from article on "Religion."

"This God of the Egyptians was unique, perfect, endowed with knowledge and intelligence, and so far incomprehensible that one can scarcely say in what respects he is incomprehensible. He is the one who exists by essence; the one sole life of all substance; the one single generator in heaven and earth who is not himself engendered; the father of fathers; the mother of mothers; always the

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same; immutable in immutable perfection; existing equally in the past, the present, and the future. He fills the universe in such wise that no earthly image can give the feeblest notion of his immensity. He is felt everywhere; he is tangible nowhere."—G. MASPERO. Translated from *Histoire Ancienne des Peuples de l'Orient*. Paris, 1876, Chap. I, p. 26.

"Unfortunately, the more we study the religion of ancient Egypt, the more our doubts accumulate with regard to the character which must finally be attributed to it. The excavations carried on of late at Denderah and Edfoo have opened up to us an extraordinarily fertile source of material. These Temples are covered with texts, and present precisely the appearance of two books which authoritatively treat not only of the Gods to which these two Temples are dedicated, but of the religion under its more general aspects. But neither in these Temples, nor in those which have been long known to us, appears the One God of Jamblichus. If Ammon is 'The First of the First' at Thebes, if Phthah is at Memphis 'The Father of all Beings, without Beginning or End,' so also is every other Egyptian God separately endowed with these attributes of the Divine Being. In other words, we everywhere find Gods who are uncreate and immortal; but nowhere that unique, invisible Deity, without name and without form, who was supposed to hover above the highest summit of the Egyptian pantheon. The Temple of Denderah, now explored to the end of its most hidden inscriptions, of a certainty furnishes no trace of this Deity. The one result which, above all others, seems to be deduced from the study of this Temple, is that, according to the Egyptians, the Universe was God himself, and that Pantheism formed the foundation of their religion." A. MARIETTE BEY. Translated from *Itinéraire de la Haute Egypte*. Alexandria, 1872, p. 54.

"The Sun is the most ancient object of Egyptian worship found upon the monuments. His birth each day when he springs from the bosom of the nocturnal heaven is the natural emblem of the eternal generation of the divinity. Hence the celestial space became identified with the divine mother. It was particularly the nocturnal heaven which was represented by this personage. The rays of the sun, as they awakened all nature, seemed to give life to animated beings. Hence that which doubtless was originally a symbol, became the foundation of the religion. It is the Sun himself whom we find habitually invoked as the supreme being. The addition of his Egyptian name, Ra, to the names of certain local divinities, would seem to show that this identification constituted a

second epoch in the history of the religions of the Valley of the Nile."—VISCOUNT E. DE ROUGÉ. Translated from *Notice Sommaire des Monuments Egyptiens du Louvre*. Paris: 1873, p. 120.

That the religion, whether based on a solar myth or upon a genuine belief in a spiritual God, became grossly material in its later developments, is apparent to every student of the monuments. M. Maspero has the following remarks on the degeneration of the old faith.

"In the course of ages, the sense of the religion became obscured. In the texts of Greek and Roman date, that lofty conception of the divinity which had been cherished by the early theologians of Egypt still peeps out here and there. Fragmentary phrases and epithets yet prove that the fundamental principles of the religion are not quite forgotten. For the most part, however, we find that we no longer have to do with the infinite and intangible God of ancient days; but rather with a God of flesh and blood who lives upon earth, and has so abased himself as to be no more than a human king. It is no longer this God of whom no man knew either the form or the substance:—it is Kneph at Esneh; Hathor at Denderah; Horus, king of the divine dynasty, at Edfoo. This king has a court, ministers, an army, a fleet. His eldest son, Horhat, Prince of Cush and heir-presumptive to the throne, commands the troops. His first minister Thoth, the inventor of letters, has geography and rhetoric at his fingers' ends; is Historiographer-Royal; and is entrusted with the duty of recording the victories of the king and of celebrating them in high-sounding phraseology. When this God makes war upon his neighbour Typhon, he makes no use of the divine weapons of which we should take it for granted that he could dispose at will. He calls out his archers and his chariots; descends the Nile in his galley, as might the last new Pharaoh; directs marches and counter-marches; fights planned battles; carries cities by storm, and brings all Egypt in submission to his feet. We see here that the Egyptians of Ptolemaic times had substituted for the one God of their ancestors a line of God-Kings, and had embroidered these modern legends with a host of fantastic details."—G. MASPERO. Translated from *Histoire Ancienne des Peuples de l'Orient*. Paris: 1876, chap. i. pp. 50-51.

APPENDIX IV.

EGYPTIAN CHRONOLOGY.

"The chronology of Egypt has been a disputed point for centuries. The Egyptians had no cycle, and only dated in the regnal years of their monarchs. The principal Greek sources have been the canon of Ptolemy, drawn up in the second century A.D., and the lists of the dynasties extracted from the historical work of Manetho, an Egyptian priest, who lived in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, B.C. 285-247. The discrepancies between these lists and the monuments have given rise to many schemes and rectifications of the chronology. The principal chronological points of information obtained from the monuments are the conquest of Egypt by Cambyzes, B.C. 527, the commencement of the reign of Psammetichus I., B.C. 665, the reign of Tirhaka, about B.C. 693, and that of Bokchoris, about B.C. 720, the synchronism of the reign of Shishak I. with the capture of Jerusalem, about B.C. 970. The principal monuments throwing light on other parts of the chronology are the recorded heliacal risings of Sothis, or the Dog-star, in the reigns of Thothmes III. and Rameses II., III., VI., IX., the date of 400 years from the time of Rameses II. to the Shepherd kings, the dated sepulchral tablets of the bull Apis at the Serapeum, the lists of kings at Sakkarah, Thebes, and Abydos, the chronological canon of the Turin papyrus, and other incidental notices. But of the anterior dynasties no certain chronological dates are afforded by the monuments, those hitherto proposed not having stood the test of historical or philological criticism."—S. BIRCH, LL.D.: *Guide to the First and Second Egyptian Rooms at the Brit. Museum.* 1874, p. 10.

As some indication of the wide divergence of opinion upon this subject, it is enough to point out that the German Egyptologists alone differ as to the date of Menes or Mena (the first authentic king of the ancient empire), to the following extent:—

	B. C.
BOECKH places Mena in . . .	5702
UNGER " " . . .	5613
BRUGSCH " " . . .	4455
LAUTH " " . . .	4157
LEPSIUS " " . . .	3892
BUNSEN " " . . .	3623

M. Mariette, though recognising the need for extreme caution in the acceptance or rejection of any of these calculations, is inclined on the whole to abide for the present by the lists of Manetho; according to which the thirty-four recorded dynasties would stand as follows:—

ANCIENT EMPIRE.			NEW EMPIRE.		
DYNASTIES.	CAPITALS.	B.C.	DYNASTIES.	CAPITALS.	B.C.
I. } This . . .		{ 5004	XVIII. } Thebes . . .		{ 1703
II. } . . .		{ 4751	XIX. } . . .		{ 1462
III. } . . .		{ 4449	XX. } . . .		{ 1288
IV. } Memphis . . .		{ 4235	XXI. Tanis . . .		1110
V. } . . .		{ 3951	XXII. Bubastis . . .		980
VI. Elephantine . . .		3703	XXIII. Tanis . . .		810
VII. } Memphis . . .		3500	XXIV. Sais . . .		721
VIII. } . . .			XXV. (Ethiopians) . . .		715
IX. } Heracleopolis . . .		{ 3358	XXVI. Sais . . .		665
X. } . . .		{ 3240	XXVII. (Persians) . . .		527
MIDDLE EMPIRE.			XXVIII. Sais . . .		405
XI. } Thebes . . .		{ 3064	XXIX. Mendes . . .		399
XII. } . . .		{ " "	XXX. Sebennytis . . .		378
XIII. } . . .		{ 2851	XXXI. (Persians) . . .		340
XIV. Xoïs . . .		2398	LOWER EMPIRE.		
XV. } . . .			XXXII. Macedonians . . .		332
XVI. } Shepherd Kings . . .		{ 2214	XXXIII. (Greeks) . . .		305
XVII. } . . .			XXXIV. (Romans) . . .		30

To this chronology may be opposed the brief table of dates compiled by M. Chabas. This table represents what may be called the medium school of Egyptian chronology, and is offered by M. Chabas, "not as an attempt to reconcile systems," but as an aid to the classification of certain broadly indicated epochs.

	B.C.
Mena and the commencement of the Ancient Empire . . .	4000
Construction of the great Pyramids . . .	3300
VIth Dynasty . . .	2800
XIIth Dynasty . . .	{ 2400
Shepherd Invasion . . .	{ 2000
Expulsion of Shepherds, and commencement of the New Empire	?
Thothmes III. . .	1800
Seti I. and Rameses II. . .	1700
Sheshonk (Shishak), the conqueror of Jerusalem . . .	{ 1500
Saitic Dynasties . . .	{ 1400
Cambyses and the Persians . . .	1000
Second Persian conquest . . .	700
Ptolemies . . .	600
	500
	400
	300
	200
	100

It is, however, probable that M. Chabas will before long correct some of the earlier dates in this scheme, so as to bring them into accordance with the date which he is of late reported to have determined with respect to the pyramid of Menkara. The *Bulletin Mensuel de l'Académie des Inscriptions* for the month of April 1876, as published in the *Revue Archéologique* for the month of May following, announces this latest addition to M. Chabas's many learned and important discoveries in the following terms:—

"M. de Saulcy annonce à l'Académie que M. Chabas est parvenu à déterminer une nouvelle date dans l'histoire primitive de l'Egypte, date extrêmement importante, puisqu'elle se rapporte au règne de Menchérès. Cette date tombe dans l'intervalle qui sépare l'an 3010 de l'an 3007 avant notre ère. M. de Saulcy a refait les calculs de M. Chabas; il les trouve exacts. Ainsi serait définitivement fixée l'époque de la construction des grandes pyramides, et Ménès appartiendrait bien, comme d'autres calculs l'avaient fait penser, au xxxxe siècle avant Jésus-Christ."—*Revue Arch.* No. V Mai, 1876.

Translation:—M. de Saulcy announces to the Academy that M. Chabas has succeeded in determining a new date in the primitive history of Egypt—a date of extreme importance, since it refers to the reign of Menkara. This date falls in the interval which lies between the years 3010 and 3007 before our era. M. de Saulcy has verified the calculations of M. Chabas, and finds them exact. Hence we are enabled to attach a definite date to the epoch of the construction of the great pyramids, and Mena will belong, as other calculations have already led us to suppose, to the xxxvth century before Christ."

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